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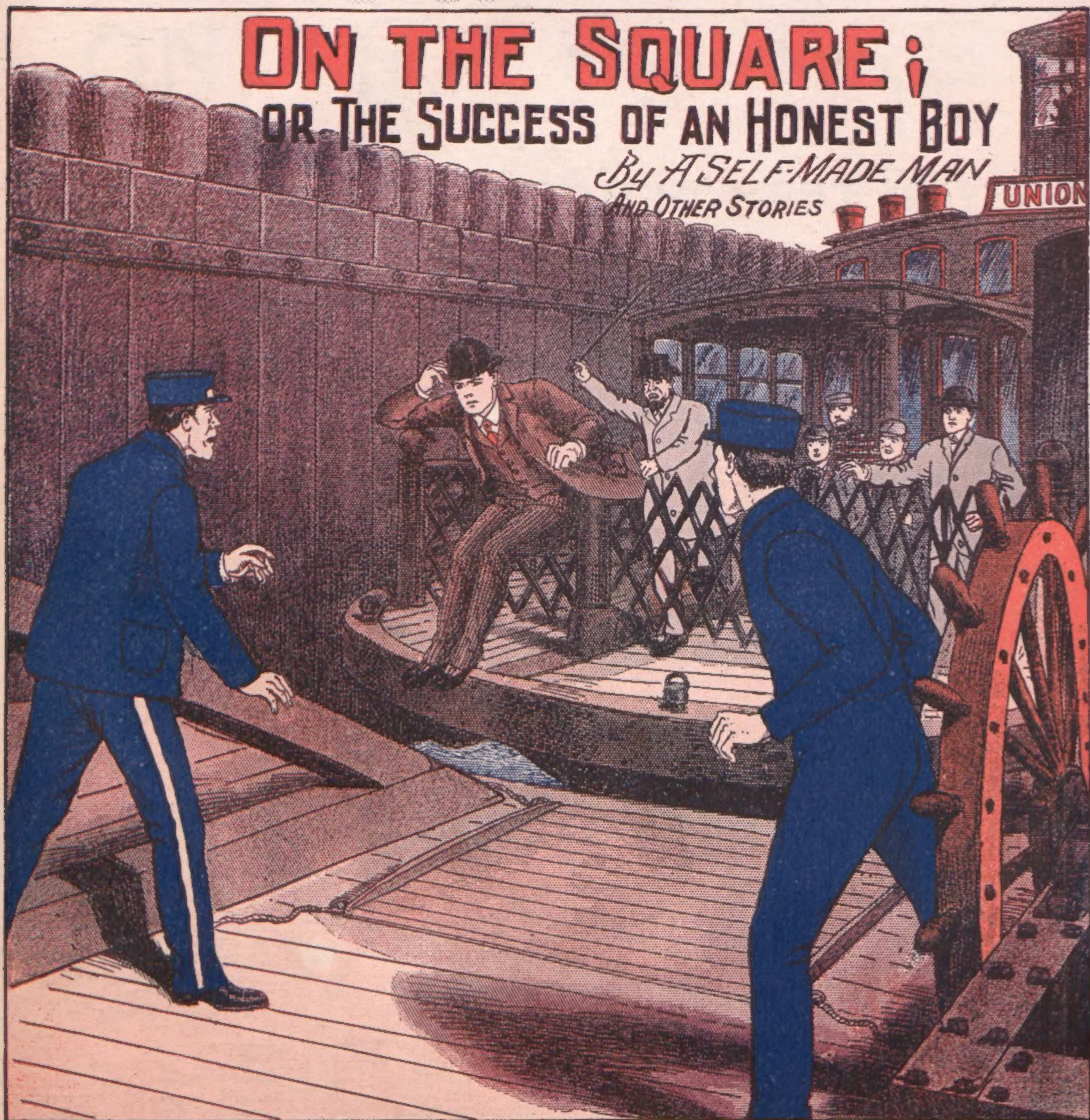
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# FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF  
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

## ON THE SQUARE; OR THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY

*By A SELF-MADE MAN*  
AND OTHER STORIES



Silas Cobb, cane upraised, followed in full chase. The boat had already started out of the slip, but Bob, measuring the intervening space with his eye, took a flying leap and landed safely with both feet on the dock.







# Fame and Fortune Weekly

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, AUGUST 13, 1915.

Price 5 Cents.

# ON THE SQUARE

— OR —

## THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

### CHAPTER I

#### BOB KEANE'S AMBITION.

"I wish I had two hundred dollars," said Bob Keane, wistfully, as he and his cousin, Morris Cobb, stood looking at the following announcement posted up side by side with various vendue notices on the bulletin board in the Newtown post-office:

FOR SALE—On account of the death of William Hazen, all the good will and fixtures (consisting of one two-year-old sorrel horse, known as Jim Dandy; one set of harness in fair condition, and one four-wheeled wagon in good order) of the Hazen Express Route. Price, \$200. The same may be seen at any time by calling on Mrs. William Hazen, Bloomfield.

"What do you want two hundred dollars for?" asked Morris, regarding his companion in some surprise.

"I'd buy out Hazen's Express Route," replied Bob, promptly.

"Ho!" exclaimed Morris Cobb, contemptuously. "What would you do with Hazen's Express Route?"

"I'd run it and make money."

"I guess you're crazy. I've heard Hazen couldn't make the thing pan out, so how could you expect to do anything with it, even if my father would let you take hold of it, which he wouldn't, I know."

"The reason Hazen didn't make a success out of the route was because he preferred to put in most of his time at the barroom down at the tavern instead of attending to business. He neglected his customers, and put them to all kinds of inconvenience, so that they often had to go clear to Bloomfield themselves to get their stuff. I wouldn't do business that way if I owned the route. I don't think Uncle Silas would stop me from earning a little money on my own hook. I need it badly enough. He hasn't any claim on my time, anyway."

"My father is your guardian, isn't he?" said Morris.

"Suppose he is. He doesn't treat me any too well. Look at my clothes. Is this a decent suit for a boy with \$10,000 to be obliged to go around town in?"

"You've got a better one. Why don't you wear that?"

"I've got a Sunday suit, yes. And your mother wouldn't get over the shock for a month if she saw that on me any week-day except it was a legal holiday. She'd simply make Rome howl, and Uncle Silas would back her up, too. I tell you, Morris, I'm tired of the way things are, and I'm going to make a change if I can."

"What do you mean to do? Run away?"

"No. I'm going to find some way of making money, so I can clothe myself decently. The probate court allowed uncle

five dollars a week for my support, but I guess he doesn't spend half that sum on me. He's too close to spend a cent more on me than he can help. I heard a man say the other day that your father was so mean that he'd boil a wooden skewer to get the grease out of it."

"Who said that?" asked Morris, angrily.

"I'm not mentioning any names, but the man said it all right."

"He deserves to be arrested for making such a remark as that," said Morris, indignantly. "You ought to tell father who it was."

"And start a whole lot of trouble," retorted Bob. "The man didn't say it to me, so it's not my business to carry the news home."

"Well, supposing you did start into the express business, it wouldn't do you any good. If you made any money father would take it away from you."

"Why would he?" demanded Bob, shortly.

"Because he has a legal right to take charge of all that belongs to you and keep it till you come of age."

"Well, if I make any money by my own efforts you can bet he won't get hold of a cent of it."

"How are you going to help yourself?"

"That's my business. I've worked like a slave for Uncle Silas for a good many years—ever since father died, eight years ago—and what have I got for it, and for the five dollars a week he gets for my keep? I've got nothing but the short end of everything. Well, I'm sick of it. I'm sixteen now, and I'm going to stand out for a square deal. I'm willing to do the right thing by Uncle Silas if he'll do the same by me. I'd have no objection to letting him keep any money I'd make if he'd guarantee to clothe me right, feed me properly, and not interfere with my business arrangements. But I'm afraid it isn't in him to do that. I've lived eight years in your family, and I've got your father down pretty fine. I'm sorry to say, Morris, that I couldn't take his word to treat me the way I want to be treated, because I'm dead sure he wouldn't do it. Your father is too old to change his ways now. What's bred in the bone comes out in the flesh. Your father can't change his disposition no more than a leopard can his spots. So that's all there is to it."

Bob Keane thrust his hands down deep into the pockets of his shabby trousers and strode out of the general store and post-office.

His cousin Morris followed him as far as the door, and while Bob continued on up the street he took possession of one of the chairs on the broad veranda, where the village loungers congregated at times and, drawing a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, selected one, lit it and proceeded to enjoy himself after the lazy fashion that was habitual with him.



There was a mighty difference between those two boys.

Bob was strong, good-looking and endowed with lots of energy and ambition; Morris was thin, with little real stamina, sallow-complexioned, and handicapped with a constitutional aversion for anything that looked like work.

Bob was dissatisfied with his position and was prepared to hustle in order to improve it; Morris was discontented with his situation, too, though he was a hundred-fold better off at that time than his cousin, but he didn't know how to secure the doubtful privileges and extra pocket money he craved.

Silas Cobb, the uncle and guardian of the one and father of the other, was a man of economical principles, to put it in a mild way.

The villagers said he was mean and penurious—in fact, he was hated and despised by his neighbors and acquaintances.

He hadn't a friend in Newtown; but that fact didn't seem to worry him for a cent, for he went right on attending to his business of auctioneer and real estate dealer just as if he was the most popular man in town.

When Edward Keane, Bob's father, died suddenly eight years before, leaving property worth, after his debts had been paid, \$10,000, and a motherless boy, the probate court favorably considered the application of Silas Cobb, his brother-in-law, to be made the orphan's guardian.

Silas obtained control of both the property and the boy, got an allowance of \$5 a week for the lad's support, and then proceeded to squeeze as much profit out of the transaction as it was possible for him to do.

As long as Bob's real aunt lived she saw to it that her nephew was well treated; but she died a year after Bob became an inmate of Mr. Cobb's home, and a year later Silas married an old maid, worth a little money, and almost as parsimonious as Silas Cobb himself, and thenceforward Bob found his path hard and thorny, and even Morris, the old man's son, found a big difference in things in general, against which he put up many a strenuous but not always effectual kick.

Although Bob Keane had nothing particular on his hands that morning, he did not stroll up the street in the easy, careless fashion that most boys would have assumed under the circumstances.

On the contrary, he walked smartly along the tree-shaded Main street, with his head erect and his eyes bent straight before him.

Everybody in Newtown knew Bob, and not one but liked the cheery-faced boy, and was glad to exchange a word or two with him.

As every one knows, or thinks he knows, his neighbor's business in a country village, Bob's bringing up under the roof-tree of Silas Cobb was no secret to the little community.

There were plenty of people to say that the bright lad was treated meaner than dirt, considering his prospects.

They thought that it was a shame, an outrage, and so on; but their sympathy did not make Bob's lot any easier at his home, which, on the whole, was the most disagreeable spot he visited within the twenty-four hours of a day.

It was the general impression in Newtown that if the boy was so fortunate as to meet with some fatal accident, or to contract some malady that would carry him to the churchyard, Silas Cobb would look upon such a dispensation of Providence as a red-letter day in his calendar, since in the event of Bob's death the \$10,000 of which he was now only the custodian, under the stringent regulations of the probate court, would revert to him without question.

Of course what people think is not always the truth—certainly there was no evidence that Bob's uncle wished him out of the way; but there is no doubt he believed that the \$10,000 in question would be much better in his hands for an indefinite period than in Bob's, even after he had reached the legal age of twenty-one.

Silas had utilized Bob's services on his ten-acre farm until the boy got tired of being made a slave of and rebelled.

Mr. Cobb was afraid to use force to compel the boy to continue, because some one had told him that Bob could get a lawyer to go before the probate court and make a complaint of the way he was treated, and that if he could prove one-half of what the people believed he was up against, the court would remove his present guardian and appoint a new one.

That contingency frightened Silas, for it would mean the loss of the profits he managed to get out of the \$10,000; consequently he let Bob have his own way.

When the boy threatened to go out and try to make some money on his own hook, as he did a day or two before the opening of our story, Mr. Cobb offered no objection, for he knew that if Bob managed to accumulate any fund or other property the law gave him the right to take possession of it

in trust for his ward, provided, of course, that he could get his hands on it.

As Bob walked up the street his mind was full of visions of what he thought he would be able to accomplish if he could buy out Hazen's Express Route.

If Silas Cobb had been a decent kind of man the lad would have gone home as fast as his legs could have carried him, and made a proposition to his guardian to purchase the said express route in his interest and let him run it, in which case he would not have objected to his uncle taking the profits and storing them up for him.

But Mr. Cobb wasn't that sort of man.

It would have been easier to have squeezed a quart of cider out of the foundation stones of his shabby-looking cottage than to get \$200 out of Silas for any purpose whatever—except maybe to pay Bob's funeral expenses.

Under such discouraging circumstances, Bob had no hopes of ever coming into the express business unless he could persuade Mrs. Hazen to let him have the good will and outfit on credit, and he hadn't yet thought of approaching her on such a doubtful mission.

What is furthest from expectation is sometimes nearest of realization, and so it was with the express business, but Bob didn't know it.

## CHAPTER II.

### A THRILLING RESCUE.

Newtown was a good-sized village in Ulster County, New York State.

It was situated perhaps a mile south of the trolley road which runs between Highland, on the Hudson River opposite Poughkeepsie, and New Palz, on the Walkyll Valley Railroad.

Many of the villagers and farmers in the neighborhood added to their income by taking boarders in the summer.

As our story opens in the early part of June, there were already a number of city people at the different houses.

Among these was a wealthy New York merchant named William Fairchild and his daughter Fanny, a charming little miss of fourteen.

They were stopping at the home of a well-to-do farmer who lived about a mile outside of Newtown.

Fanny Fairchild, being an only motherless daughter, was an especial pet of her father, who lavished on her everything that her heart wished for.

Most young persons of her age under these circumstances would have been completely spoiled.

There was so little waywardness about Fanny, and her nature was so gentle and affectionate, that it never occurred to her to take advantage of her father's weakness.

Sometimes, it is true, she was a little bit wilful, and would insist on having her own way; but these occasions were the exception, not the rule.

Among other accomplishments Fanny was a fairly good young horsewoman.

If there was one thing she enjoyed better than another it was to mount her pony Dandy, and ride through the highways of Central Park.

When she and her father came up to Ulster County she wanted to bring Dandy with her, but her father objected to this, as it was his intention to go into the heart of the Catskills after a month's sojourn near Newtown, and he did not wish to encourage her horseback riding propensity in a section of the country where she might meet with a serious accident.

When Fanny got settled at Farmer Jordan's she was delighted to find that there was a beautiful though rather high-spirited little mare on the farm, and she insisted on using her upon the road when she could persuade her father to accompany her as an escort, for she was not permitted to go out alone.

On the day that Bob Keane read the "For Sale" notice of Hazen's Express Route at the village post-office, Fanny Fairchild and her father started out on a morning ride along the county road.

Fanny, of course, was mounted on the little mare, which was feeling particularly festive on this occasion, while her father bestrode a brown gelding.

They had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile from the farmhouse, in the direction of the village, when a big touring automobile came bowling along behind them.

The chauffeur let off a weird and ear-piercing shriek as a warning to them that he expected undisputed right-of-way, for the machine was humming along at a thirty-mile-an-hour clip.

The mare and the gelding were both thoroughly startled by



the outlandish toot, and their fright was magnified by the rush of the red machine as it whizzed by them like an arrow from a bow.

Both animals rose on their haunches, and, while the horse backed up against the fence, the little mare, with a snort of terror, dashed off down the road toward Newtown at a pace that would have made the famous Tam o'Shanter look like thirty cents.

Fanny was now placed in a situation of great peril, because the bridle-reins had become unbuckled from the bit, and she had no control whatever over the spirited and terror-stricken animal on which she was mounted.

She could only cling wildly to the side-saddle with both hands and let matters take their course.

Bob Keane passed along up Main street until he came to its junction with the county road, and then kept on along the road.

He was going to call on a particular friend of his named Dan Griswold.

Dan lived on a farm with his parents, and helped to do his share of the work.

The Griswolds had a good-sized strawberry patch, and Dan was busy these days picking the fruit for market.

A creek crossed the road at the beginning of the Griswold boundary line, and afterward diverged through the property.

Bob and Dan often rowed up and down this narrow stream, which emptied in a small lake two miles from the road.

The county had built a substantial bridge over the creek connecting both ends of the road.

The day previous, however, a heavy team, guided by an intoxicated driver, had smashed into and broken down one of the railings of the bridge, leaving it in a dangerous condition.

As the road turned kind of short at this point a swiftly-driven team needed careful guidance to avoid being switched off the planks into the creek—a drop of twenty feet.

Bob stopped to look at the damage the bridge had sustained.

When he started on again he heard the rattle of wagon wheels from the direction of the village.

A moment after the sharp and rapid click of a horse's hoofs on the hard road in front of him reached his ear.

"Somebody's racing down the road at a mighty fast clip," he muttered. "With a vehicle coming this way, if the two parties meet at the bridge, there is liable to be a serious mix-up, and with the railing broken I shouldn't be surprised if one of them went over into the creek."

Bob hurried forward with the intention of trying to warn the horseman, who was hidden by the bend in the highway.

He had hardly gone a dozen yards before Jordan's little white mare, with Fanny Fairchild clinging fear-stricken to the saddle, came flying into sight, with bent head and tossing mane.

"My gracious!" exclaimed Bob, staring at the approaching animal and its helpless young rider. "This is a clear case of runaway. That girl stands a good chance of being killed at the bridge. I must try and stop that horse somehow."

The boy's sharp eyes not only saw that the bridle-reins were useless, but that the girl's seat in the saddle was insecure, and it seemed every moment as though she would fall under the hoofs of the horse.

To stop a frightened animal coming at you like a small whirlwind is not a very easy thing to do, and no one knew that better than Bob.

But the risk attending such a feat did not deter the brave boy in the least.

A human life was in peril, and the fact that the endangered one was a young and lovely little girl, appealed to all the chivalry in the lad's nature.

The first thing he did was to tear off his jacket, spring into the middle of the road and wave it at the mare.

The animal saw the apparition before it and swerved aside.

For the moment her speed slackened by one-half, and Bob took instant advantage of the circumstance to make a grab at the bridle with his right hand, at the same time throwing his left around the mare's neck.

The animal sprang forward again and tried to shake the boy off, dragging him with her clear to the bridge.

The wagon, which was approaching from the opposite direction, reached the bridge at the same time.

For a moment a collision between the parties seemed inevitable.

Bob, however, succeeded in swinging the mare into the hedge and stopping her at the very edge of the broken rail.

It was an exceedingly narrow escape for Fanny, whose whitening face and staring eyes showed that she was on the point of fainting.

As soon as Bob had arrested the animal's flight he turned and caught Fanny in his arms as she was sliding out of the saddle.

The man driving the wagon had reined in at the center of the bridge.

At that moment Mr. Fairchild himself came dashing down the road at a high speed in pursuit of his little girl.

His heart had been in his throat the whole distance he had traversed, for he realized the imminent peril his child was facing.

He was just in time to witness the final act in the little drama—the stoppage of the mare at the end of the broken bridge by Bob Keane.

### CHAPTER III.

#### BOB BORROWS TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS.

Mr. Fairchild sprang from his saddle and ran up to his daughter.

"Fanny, my darling," he cried in a voice of agony, as he snatched her from Bob's arms. "Look at me. Tell me you are not hurt. Tell me——"

Her father's voice revived the fainting girl, and she opened her eyes and threw her arms about his neck.

"No, father," she answered, faintly, "I am not injured. This boy saved me. I couldn't have held on a moment longer. He is a brave——"

The reaction got in its fine work, and she fainted dead away.

"My poor child!" exclaimed Mr. Fairchild, in great distress. "I'm afraid——"

"Don't be alarmed, sir," chipped in Bob, reassuringly. "She's only fainted. I'll get some water out of the creek below. Better lay her on the grass."

The merchant obeyed the boy's suggestion and laid Fanny down on the soft turf by the side of the road, taking her head, with its mass of golden hair, on his knee.

Bob climbed down to the creek, filled the top of his soft-crowned hat with water, and returned to the road.

He held it while Mr. Fairchild dashed some of the liquid in his child's face and chafed her hands and temples.

These simple methods presently brought the girl back to her senses.

"Father!" she murmured. "Where am I?"

Then her eyes rested on Bob, and instantly memory re-asserted itself.

She held out her hand to him and smiled faintly.

"I shall remember you as long as I live," she said. "What is your name?"

"Bob Keane, miss."

"Young man, you have saved my daughter's life," spoke up Mr. Fairchild, with considerable emotion. "I am very grateful to you."

"Don't mention it, sir. I am glad I was able to stop her horse. I knew the bridge was broken, and with that wagon coming this way, too, I was afraid——"

"I understand," interrupted the merchant, looking down into the creek below with a shudder. "If the mare had gone off the bridge my daughter would surely have been killed or drowned."

"I saw the whole thing, sir," volunteered the wagoner. "I must say it was the pluckiest act I ever saw in my life. But it's like Bob Keane to do just such a thing. He is the smartest boy in the village."

"Oh, come now, Fenton, no bouquets, please," grinned Bob.

"I am sure I never can thank you enough, Master Keane," said Mr. Fairchild, as Fanny sat up and smiled again at the good-looking boy, whose bravery had much impressed her, as if she was not aware to cultivating his acquaintance. "I hope you will permit us to know you better. I and my daughter are stopping at Mr. Jordan's farm, about half a mile from here. We shall be very glad to have you call on us there as often as you can make it convenient. You must join with me in this invitation, Fanny."

"Yes, father. You will come, won't you?" she said sweetly, turning to Bob.

"Yes, miss, if you wish me to. Who shall I ask for?" he asked.

"My name is Fanny Fairchild. Now, when shall we expect to see you?"

"I'll come over in a day or so."

"Be sure that you do. I shall be on the lookout for you. Come to-morrow, in the afternoon, and take tea with us, won't you?"

Bob looked doubtful, although he was anxious to say yes.



"You will come, won't you?" the little miss persisted, with such a bewitching smile that the boy said yes and took the engagement.

"Now, young man," said Mr. Fairchild, "I hope you will allow me to testify my grateful appreciation of your services in a substantial manner. I owe you more than I could ever repay were I to give you my entire fortune. I should like to present you with \$500 now, simply as a little testimonial."

"No, sir. I cannot accept pay for what I did. You are both welcome to my services, for I guess any one would have acted as I did under the circumstances."

"I don't know about that, Master Keane. It isn't everybody that has the nerve, or even the inclination, to risk personal peril to save another's life. Now as a favor you'll accept this money, won't you?" and the merchant tendered Bob a roll of bills.

Fenton saw the roll of bills offered to Bob as he remounted his wagon and drove off.

The boy shook his head. Then noticing that there was a big rent in his trousers, he said:

"If you want to get me a new suit of clothes I'll call it square."

"I'll buy you a new suit with great pleasure; but you must take the money, too."

"I wouldn't know what to do with \$500, sir. Besides, my Uncle Silas would take it away from me. He's my guardian, and lays claim to all that belongs to me."

"You could take it to Bloomfield and put it in the savings bank in your own name. A minor is permitted to keep a savings bank account," said the merchant, evidently anxious to find some way to induce the boy to accept the money.

His mentioning the name of Bloomfield suddenly reminded Bob of the Hazen Express Route, which he was so anxious to embark in.

Here was the opportunity for him to get the necessary sum to purchase the goodwill and "fixtures" which had been offered for sale by the widow of the late expressman.

He had a strong objection to accepting any money for saving pretty Fanny Fairchild from perhaps a fatal ending to her ride; but he was not averse to borrowing \$200 of the amount her father seemed so desirous of pressing upon him in order to accomplish the desire of his heart.

"I'll tell you what I'll do, sir. I'll borrow \$200 from you, if you will let me have it that way. I want to go into the express business between Highland and Bloomfield. The man who worked the route died awhile ago and his business is for sale."

"But I don't want to lend you \$200; I want to give you \$500."

Fanny, who had been watching Bob intently during the foregoing conversation, now interposed.

"Let him have his way, papa," she said, knowing that her father would not accept the money back if Bob offered to return it at some subsequent day. "Loan him the \$500."

"I will only borrow \$200," replied Bob, decidedly. "That is all I need to set myself up in business, and I don't believe in borrowing a cent more than is necessary."

"Very well," replied Mr. Fairchild, yielding the point, since he saw no other way of getting around the matter. "I will loan you the \$200 you want."

He handed Bob four \$50 bills.

"Thank you, sir. I will bring my note for this around to Mr. Jordan's when I call to-morrow afternoon."

"All right; please yourself," answered the merchant with a smile. "Now, here's \$25 to buy you a new suit of clothes. I hope you won't want to consider that a loan, too."

"No, sir. I'll accept that as a present, and buy the clothes as soon as I go to Highland."

The little white mare and the brown gelding had been nipping the grass by the roadside after a very contented fashion ever since they had been left to themselves.

Fanny now stepped up to the mare with the intention of remounting her.

"Papa," she said, "will you fix the bridle-reins for me?"

"I will do that if you like," said Bob, eager to be of further service to the lovely little fairy.

Bob reattached the reins in a secure way.

"Shall I help you mount?" he asked, a bit bashfully.

"Why, of course," she answered.

She put one foot in the stirrup and the boy lifted her into the saddle as gently as he would have handled a baby.

"Thank you," she said, smiling down at him. "Are you ready, papa?"

"All ready," answered her father, springing on the gelding's back.

"Good-by, Bob Keane," she said, extending her disengaged hand to him. "And, remember, I shall expect to see you to-morrow afternoon."

"Good-by, Miss Fanny, I'll be sure to call."

"Good-by, my lad," said Mr. Fairchild. "You may rest assured that I shall not forget what you did for my daughter, and I trust I may have the opportunity some day of doing something more for you."

Fanny and her father started their animals at a brisk gallop back along the road they had come, leaving Bob delighted with the good fortune which had fallen to him.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### BOB AND HIS FRIEND DAN.

Bob, after he had watched Miss Fanny and her father disappear around the bend in the road, contemplated the \$225 with a great deal of satisfaction.

"The express route is as good as mine," he breathed, happily; "that is, if somebody else hasn't purchased it already, which isn't very likely, for that notice was only put up this morning. Gee whiz! Uncle Silas wouldn't do a thing to this money if he could get hold of it. He's got fingers like pot-hooks—they hang on to everything they clutch. Well, he won't get his optics on this stuff, you can bet your life."

Bob stowed the four \$50 bills in one pocket and the \$25 in another; then he kept on up the road till he came to the lane which led to the Griswold farmhouse.

Dan Griswold was working industriously in the strawberry patch, but he was expecting to see his friend, as Bob had promised to come over to the farm that morning.

"Hello, Dan," exclaimed Bob. "I'll give you a lift while I'm here if you wish."

"All right. Pitch right in. Anything new in the village?"

"Yes. There's a new baby up at the Hitchcocks. It arrived last night," grinned Bob, as he began picking berries.

"Tom Hitchcock must feel as if he owned the town," chuckled Dan.

"You can bet he does. I saw him up at the tavern treating everybody around."

"Any other new thing?" asked Dan.

"Hazen's Express Route is for sale."

"Is that so? Somebody told me Mrs. Hazen was going to have her nephew carry it on."

"Must have changed her mind, for there's a notice in the postoffice offering the whole outfit for \$200."

"I guess it's worth that."

"I guess it is, too."

"She ought not to have much trouble finding a purchaser."

"She won't."

"You seem to be pretty positive about it."

"I am."

"Do you know anybody that's going to buy it?"

"I do."

"Who is it?"

"Myself."

"Yourself?" exclaimed Dan, looking hard at his friend.

"That's what I said," answered Bob, coolly.

"You're joking, aren't you?"

"No, I'm not joking."

"Then you're actually going to buy Hazen's Express Route and run it?"

"That's right."

"Now I wouldn't have believed that your uncle would come up with a cent to help you—"

"He didn't," interrupted Bob.

"Then where do you expect to get \$200?"

"I've got it already."

"You have!" exclaimed Dan in great surprise.

"I have."

"Where did you get it?"

"I borrowed it."

"Oh, come now. Who would lend you \$200?"

"A gentleman named Fairchild loaned it to me."

"Fairchild? Never heard of such a person in this neighborhood."

"He's a New York merchant who is boarding with his daughter at Jordan's."

"And he loaned you \$200?" said Dan, with an incredulous grin.

"He did."

"What for?"

"For saving his daughter from having her neck broken a little while ago by Jordan's little white mare."



"You don't say! Tell me about it," said Dan, ceasing operation on the berry patch and eying Bob in an interested way.

Bob told him how Fanny Fairchild's mount had run away with her, and how he had fortunately been on hand to save her.

Dan grinned when his friend described how pretty the girl was.

"Going to call on her to-morrow?" he chuckled.

"I hope so."

"You're lucky. When are you going to Bloomfield to buy the express route?"

"After dinner."

"What'll your uncle say?"

"I'm not worrying about what he'll say."

"Do you think he'll let you run the business?"

"I don't see that he'll have any right to interfere with me."

"But he's your guardian, you know."

"I know he is. And he's a fine one, isn't he?" replied Bob, sarcastically. "I look as if there was \$10,000 coming to me one of these days, don't I? I've asked him a dozen times to buy me a decent every-day suit, but he won't. He says I don't need any clothes."

"I don't wonder everybody says he's the meanest man in the county."

"Mean! Say, that word isn't enough to express my opinion of Uncle Silas. He's so mean that I believe he'd have a fit if he mislaid a penny and couldn't find it again."

"You told me once that he gets \$5 a week to board and clothe you. I don't think that it costs him over \$1 a week to feed you, so he could easily afford to buy you a new suit once in a while."

"If you was to see the table the Cobbs set you'd say it didn't cost \$1 a week for the whole family."

"Don't you get enough to eat?" asked Dan, in surprise, though he had heard Bob complain on the subject before.

"No; except when the minister calls, which isn't often."

"Why don't you kick?"

"I have; but it doesn't do any good. He told me that he doesn't believe in pampering boys' appetites. That the worst sin in the calendar is gluttony. Now, what do you think of that?"

"I think it's the worst I ever heard. How does Morris stand it?"

"He's always howling. Occasionally his stepmother cooks something extra for him, just to keep the peace; but she never does that for me."

"I think you're an easy mark. I never could put up with the treatment you are getting whether I had \$10,000 coming to me or not."

"What would you do about it?"

"I'd skip out, and hoe my own row."

"Well, I'm not going to skip out, but I'm going to hoe my own row just the same. I'm going to take hold of Hazen's business and build it up."

"If you make any money your guardian will but in and take it."

"I mean to keep it out of his reach."

"If you can do that you'll be all right; but I'm afraid you'll have trouble getting around it."

"Uncle Silas has stood on my neck long enough. I've put up with it as long as I'm going to. I intend to have a little money in my clothes, so when there's famine on the table I'll go up to Mrs. Kydd's restaurant and have my dinner."

"Well, Bob, I hope you'll come out all right."

"It won't be my fault if I don't."

At that moment a horn sounded from the back door of the farmhouse.

"That means dinner," said Dan, straightening up and looking his satisfaction. "Come along and have a square meal. You'll find plenty on our table. Mother expects you."

"All right. I won't deny that I'm hungry. We had a glass of milk, some very weak porridge, a piece of bread with a little butter, and anticipations for breakfast."

"What do you mean by anticipations?" asked Dan, curiously.

"Anticipations of what we would have for dinner," grinned Bob.

"Oh!" snickered Dan, picking up one of the tin pails of berries, while Bob took the other.

Mrs. Griswold welcomed Bob in a hearty way that was positively refreshing to the lad, and Mr. Griswold, when he came in from the fields, had something friendly to say to him, too.

Dan hadn't made any mistake when he said there would be plenty to eat on his mother's table.

There was heaps of it.

It was a positive feast for Bob, and he required no second invitation to sail in and make himself at home.

"Have another slice of pie," said Mrs. Griswold to Bob, who was already as full as a tick.

"No, thank you. I couldn't eat another mouthful to save my life. I was just thinking you might have to rig a derrick to lift me out of this chair."

Dan let out a big guffaw at Bob's remark, while Mr. and Mrs. Griswold both smiled.

They had often heard from their son that his friend lived continuously on short rations at the Cobb home.

That was no surprise to them, as the parsimony of the Cobbs in every point of life was well known throughout the district.

"Well," said Bob, when he and Dan had left the table, "I'll go home now, put on my other suit and go over to Bloomfield."

"I wish you luck, Bob," said Dan, as his friend started off down the lane.

## CHAPTER V.

MR. KENWICK SHAW.

"Where have you been?" asked Morris Cobb, when Bob walked into the yard of the mean-looking habitation he called home.

"Over to the Griswold farm," replied Bob.

"Well, you won't get anything to eat now, for dinner is over and the things washed up," grinned Morris maliciously.

Bob's absence had enabled him to appropriate a double share of the meager fare and he was feeling good.

"Don't want anything," replied Bob, shortly.

"Why not? Aren't you hungry?" in surprise.

"No. Just had a first-class dinner with the Griswolds."

"Is that so?" replied Morris, in a disappointed and envious tone.

"That's so. They had a fine layout," grinned Bob, feeling in the humor of getting back at his cousin. "What do you s'pose was on the table?"

"How should I know?" answered Morris, sulkily.

"Well, there was roast veal and boiled potatoes, and asparagus, and string beans, and lots of bread and butter, and a pitcher chock full of milk, and strawberry pie. I had two big juicy slices of the pie," chuckled Bob, "and Mrs. Griswold wanted to help me to a third."

Morris listened to this luscious description in dogged silence.

It made him hungry to think about it and mad because his cousin had enjoyed such a snap.

He kicked his heels angrily into the dirt, and then walked off behind the barn, where he could enjoy a cigarette without his father's knowledge.

Bob went into the house and started to go up into his room to dress himself, when Mr. Cobb saw him and called him back.

"Where have you been all morning?" he asked, with a frown.

"Different places," replied Bob. "Most of the time up at the Griswold farm."

"What were you doing there?"

"Went to see Dan Griswold."

"I s'pose you had your dinner, because if you hadn't you won't get nothin' till tea time."

"I had something to eat with the Griswold's."

"Where are you goin' now?"

"Up to my room."

"Put on your good clothes. I want you to go to Highland to meet the 3:40 train. There's a man comin' up to look at the Chadwick farm. I expect to sell it to him."

Bob couldn't very well refuse to do his uncle's bidding, though he knew it would prevent him from going to Bloomfield that afternoon to make the purchase of the express route.

"Well," he said to himself, as he was donning his Sunday suit, "I'll go over early in the morning. I can have my breakfast in Bloomfield. Uncle Silas will be just as well pleased, for he'll save what I would eat, if Morris doesn't gobble it up himself."

So half an hour later, Bob, having hitched up Napoleon Bonaparte, Mr. Cobb's horse, called "Bony" for short—a name the villagers thought very appropriate because he seemed a veritable bundle of skin and bones—to the rickety wagon, drove out of the yard and took the country road for Highland, a village on the West Shore Railroad.



Bob reached Highland at three o'clock, and had forty minutes to wait for the New York train.

The village itself is situated on an elevation about half a mile from the railroad station, which is down near the river.

Bob drove to the station, hitched his team and then strolled down to the ferry landing to watch the boat come across from Poughkeepsie.

The train came in on time and the boy recognized his man by the description furnished by his uncle.

His name was Kenwick Shaw.

"Are you the boy that's to take me out to Newtown?" he asked, as Bob approached him.

"Yes, sir. Let me take your grip."

The boy carried it out to the wagon and tossed it in.

"Now, sir, if you're ready, we'll start along," he said.

Mr. Shaw mounted to the seat, Bob followed, and Napoleon Bonaparte started off at a quick trot, as if he scented a bagful of oats at the end of his journey.

"Where did you get this rig?" asked the man, with a grin, noting the peculiarities of the team.

"This belongs to Mr. Cobb."

"What makes that horse so thin? Don't he get enough to eat?"

"Well, sir," replied Bob, without cracking a smile, "his name is Bony, and he likes to live up to his name."

"Oh, that's it, eh?" laughed the man. "I'm bound to say that the name fits him like a new glove."

"He's always looked this way since I can remember," chuckled Bob.

"It's a wonder how he holds himself together. When we first started out I expected every moment to see him spread himself over the road. I notice he can go some."

"He certainly can. Bony can make some of the sleek-looking nags up our way look like thirty cents when he gets down to business."

"I s'pose you know I've come up to look the Chadwick farm over with the idea of buying it," said Mr. Shaw.

"So Mr. Cobb said."

"Do you live with Mr. Cobb?"

"Yes, sir."

"Hired boy, I suppose?"

"No, sir. Mr. Cobb is my uncle and guardian."

"What is your name?"

"Bob Keane."

"Well, Bob, I rather like your face. You seem to be a bright, honest boy."

"Thank you, sir, for your good opinion."

"You're welcome. I always like to talk to a smart, intelligent boy. Now what do you think of the Chadwick farm?"

"I've heard that it's a first-class piece of property, sir."

"That's what it was represented to me. I suppose I can thoroughly depend on whatever your uncle says, can't I?"

"I suppose you can, sir," replied Bob non-committally.

"Is he the only real estate man in Newtown?"

"Yes, sir. He's the county auctioneer, too."

"Then he must be a man of some standing in the community."

"He stands about five feet six in his stocking feet," replied the boy without a smile.

Mr. Shaw stared at Bob for a moment and then burst into a laugh.

"You seem to be quite a humorist, Bob."

The boy made no reply.

He looked straight ahead along the white road and chirruped to Bony.

"How far have we got to go?" asked Mr. Shaw, after a pause.

"About five miles, sir."

"Is Newtown a town or a village?"

"It's a village."

"What's the nearest town?"

"There's New Paltz, a good-sized place, about three miles to the northwest, and Bloomfield, four miles or so to the south."

"How long have you lived in this vicinity?"

"Ever since I can remember."

"Does Mr. Cobb do any farming?"

"As much as can be expected on a ten-acre plot."

"I see. I s'pose you work around the place when you're not at school?"

"I did; but I'm not going to do so any more."

"Going to work in a store?"

"No, sir. I expect to run an express wagon route between Bloomfield and Highland."

"Going to hire yourself out as the driver, eh?"

"No, sir. I'm going to buy the route and run it as my own business."

"You don't say. Think you can make it pay?"

"I think so or I shouldn't go into it."

"I thought you was a pretty clever boy," said Mr. Shaw, regarding Bob with a fresh interest. "Your uncle must so consider you if he's willing to start you up in business."

"He isn't going to start me. I'm starting myself."

"You're quite an independent young man. I should think it would cost you something for your outfit."

"Yes, sir. I expect to pay \$200 for it."

Mr. Shaw thought \$200 was a lot of money for a sixteen-year-old boy to have, but he did not consider it just right to ask Bob where he got the money from.

It seemed natural to suppose that he came by it honestly.

During the rest of the journey they conversed on different topics, and Mr. Shaw had conceived a very favorable opinion of Bob by the time the boy drove up to the front door of the Cobb cottage.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SILAS COBB'S MYSTERIOUS MIDNIGHT MOVEMENTS.

Mr. Shaw was rather unpleasantly surprised at the third-rate appearance of the Cobb home.

In a way it resembled Silas Cobb himself.

It was dingy, unpainted and rather dilapidated, just as Mr. Cobb's outward person was rusty, commonplace and unprepossessing.

Within it was cheerless and uncomfortable, quite on a par with the dispositions of Mr. Cobb and his spouse.

The general aspect of the place prepared Mr. Shaw for what he might expect to see in the real estate agent he had come to do business with, and we are bound to say that he was not disappointed.

Silas Cobb's office occupied one of the lower front rooms.

Over the door was a weather-stained sign which read:

SILAS COBB,  
Auctioneer and Real Estate.

Mr. Cobb came out to greet his visitor, whom he expected to stay all night, though the cost of the extra victuals was a severe tax upon his economical principles.

However, as he expected to make a good commission out of both parties to the deal in prospect, he comforted himself with that reflection.

"Step right into my office, Mr. Shaw," said Mr. Cobb, screwing his countenance into as genial an expression as it was possible for him to do. "I can give you all the particulars of the farm before we go in to supper."

Mr. Shaw followed his host into his small and cheerless office, while Bob drove Bony and the wagon around into the yard, unharnessed the faithful, half-starved animal and led him into his dilapidated stall.

Bob and Bony were great friends.

The horse seemed to realize that the boy was the only one who took the least interest in his welfare.

Bony would probably have gone to the bone heap long ago but for Bob, who by the greatest ingenuity managed to keep the life in his attenuated frame by feeding him on the sly an extra quantity of oats.

Silas Cobb was so blind to his own interests that he would have seen the animal starve to death before he would have opened his purse-strings enough to buy him a proper amount of food.

So Bob, who had a heart in his bosom and not a stone like his miserly uncle, frequently begged a small supply of oats from the different farmers with whom he was on friendly terms, and brought it to Bony unbeknown to his guardian, who had he discovered the circumstances was mean enough to have docked the horse his next meal in order to save something by it.

Bob never looked Bony in the face but he felt sorry for him, the animal had such a forlorn, hopeless expression, almost human in its intensity, in his big, sunken eyes.

He'd rub his nose on the boy's hand and then look at him as much as to say that life for him was a strenuous piece of business.

On this occasion Bob had stopped at a house along the road and got a small bag full of fodder for Bony, and this he dumped into his trough before leaving him.



Morris Cobb was, for a wonder, making himself useful to his stepmother.

The sudden interest he displayed in the culinary department was owing to the fact that the advent of a visitor necessitated the preparation of a number of table delicacies not often seen in the Cobb home, and the boy's mouth was watering in anticipation of the coming feast.

His idea was to try and make himself solid with his father's wife, so that he might hope to get a little more than his share of the good things.

Bob met him at the well drawing a pail of water.

"You seem to have got busy all at once," grinned Bob. "What's the matter? Trying to reduce your flesh?"

As Morris wasn't overburdened with flesh, he regarded this remark as sarcastic on Bob's part, and he scowled darkly at his cousin.

"Mind your own business, will you?" he snorted.

"I usually do, but your sudden activity took me so by surprise that I couldn't help saying something."

"I suppose you think you do all the work about the place?" sneered Morris.

"I do my share, I guess, and generally a little more."

"Not lately," replied his cousin sulkily.

"That's because I'm getting wise."

"Ho!"

"We're going to have a visitor for supper, and he's going to stay all night," said Bob.

"Tell me something I don't know, smart Aleck."

"I could tell you lots of things you don't know if I wanted to," answered Bob coolly; "but I'm afraid the shock would be too great for you."

"Is that so?" snarled Morris. "I can tell you one thing you don't know."

"What is it, sonny?" chuckled Bob.

"You're not going to be allowed to eat at the first table," triumphantly.

"Who says so?"

"Ma says so," maliciously.

"I suppose there's a reason, isn't there?"

"Yes, because there isn't room at the table."

"Oh, I see, the visitor has to occupy my seat."

"There won't be much left when you sit down," said Morris, with a grin of satisfaction. "I don't s'pose you're hungry anyway, after the big dinner you had at the Griswold farm."

"You seem to know all about it," replied Bob, not pleased with the outlook.

Morris laughed slyly, lifted the pail full of water and went into the kitchen.

"It looks as if I was going to come in for the short end again," said Bob to himself gloomily. "What's the use of being worth \$10,000 if one has to be half-starved? Well, if they put it over me in that way to-night I'll go up to Mrs. Kydd's and get my supper. It's a good thing I've got money in my pocket."

That put Bob in mind of his \$225.

It suddenly struck him that it might not be quite safe for him to carry that amount in his clothes into the house.

Mr. Cobb had such a keen nose for money that it was possible he might even smell it upon his person.

In such an event he wouldn't rest until he found some way of getting hold of it, and that would be a dreadful calamity for the boy.

So Bob sat down on the edge of the well and considered where he had better hide his money.

After some deliberation he decided to hide it in the barn. Morris hardly ever went in there, and Mr. Cobb very seldom.

Bob therefore went to the stable and looked around.

He found a loose board in one corner, and under the loose board he put all his money but a \$5 bill.

The \$5 bill he stowed away in his vest.

When Bob entered the kitchen he was not surprised, after what he had heard from Morris, to learn from the sharp lips of Mrs. Cobb that he wasn't to have his supper until the rest had eaten theirs.

It wasn't pleasant for him to sit on the doorstep, while the others were enjoying a good supper in the little dining-room, for Bob was hungry. In spite of the good dinner he had had at the Griswold farm.

But the boy didn't kick, for it wasn't his nature to revolt at what he couldn't change, and so he waited patiently for his turn to come.

When he was called inside the table looked as if it had been struck by a cyclone.

However, he found that by some good luck all the eatables had not disappeared, and that enough remained to satisfy his appetite.

Morris was evidently disappointed that Bob really got a fair share of the provender, for he had been counting on seeing his cousin go half supperless to bed.

Mr. Cobb carried a pair of chairs outside in front of the house, and there he and his guest sat and smoked and talked about the Chadwick property and other matters until the clock inside struck nine, and then the real estate man hinted that it was time to retire for the night.

Mr. Shaw was shown to a room occupied jointly by Bob and Morris.

Morris' bed, being the better of the two, was allotted to the visitor while its customary occupant had to turn in with his cousin.

Mr. Shaw had wondered why room hadn't been made at the supper table for Bob.

He sized up Morris, and the estimate he formed of his character was not particularly flattering.

However, he figured that, as the latter was the real estate man's son, while Bob was only his nephew, Morris, when it came to a pinch, had all the advantage of the situation.

Mr. Shaw had brought several hundred dollars with him to pay down on the contract if the Chadwick farm suited him.

He had three \$100 bills and four \$50 bills.

He counted this as he sat on the edge of the bed to see if it was all right.

Morris watched him turn over the ends of the bills one by one, and the figures thereon interested him greatly.

Mr. Shaw divided the money, putting the three big bills in one pocket of his vest, and the four lesser bills in another.

Then he finished disrobing and went to bed, after blowing out the lamp as he had been requested to do.

A couple of hours later Silas Cobb entered the room softly in his stocking feet and listened intently to the breathing of the three sleepers.

Whatever his business was there he did not strike a light, and he moved about as noiselessly as a shadow.

Finally he uttered a grunt of satisfaction and left the room, as softly as he had entered it.

Daylight was flitting through the window panes when Bob awoke.

He jumped out of bed and started to dress.

He noticed a pair of trousers on the floor near the head of the bed.

Picking them up, he found it was not his own, but was Morris', so he threw it on top of the rest of his cousin's clothes, finished dressing himself in his best suit, and then left the room without disturbing the other sleepers.

He went to the barn, got his money from the place where he had concealed it and then started off on foot for Bloomfield.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MISSING MONEY.

It was about six o'clock when Morris woke up.

He hurriedly dressed himself and left the house, making a bee-line for the back of the barn.

Looking carefully around to see that he was quite alone, he thrust his hand into the right pocket of his trousers.

He withdrew it with a disappointed look, and then dived into the other pocket.

A look of blank amazement came over his features.

Whatever he had expected to find was not there.

He went through both pockets once more with the same result, and then he sat down on the ground with a look on his face that would have led an observer to suppose he had just lost his only friend on earth.

It was about this time that Mr. Shaw turned over in bed, opened his eyes and discovered that it was morning.

He looked at his watch and saw that it was twenty minutes of seven.

"Time to get up, I guess," he said to himself, as he put his feet out on the floor.

He dressed himself leisurely.

After he put on his vest he mechanically put his hands into the pockets in which he had deposited his two rolls of bills.

The \$300 wad was there all right, but the four \$50 bills were missing.

"That's funny," he remarked. "I must have dropped them



on the floor last night when I thought I placed them in my pocket."

So he looked around the rag carpet for some trace of the bills.

There was no sign of them anywhere, though he shook out the bed-clothes under the supposition that they might have lodged on the coverlet.

Then he searched all his pockets very carefully without the least result.

"The money evidently is gone," he said, with a frown. "I wonder if that young Cobb could have stolen it during the night? I saw him looking at me while I was counting it. This matter will have to be investigated, for I can't afford to lose \$200."

He completed his toilet, went downstairs, found Silas Cobb in his office writing and reported his loss.

"What's that?" exclaimed the auctioneer, looking up in a startled way. "You say that \$200 was taken from your vest pocket during the night?"

"That's just what I mean to say, sir," replied the visitor brusquely. "I brought up \$500 with me to pay down on the contract if my inspection of the Chadwick farm proved satisfactory. Last night as I was undressing I counted the money to see if it was all right, and found that it was. I separated it into two parts, placing the three \$100 bills in one pocket and the four \$50 bills in another. This morning I found that the four bills had vanished during the night."

"Four bills of \$50 each?" gasped Silas Cobb, his hand unconsciously making a movement toward his trousers pocket.

"Yes, sir. Four \$50 bills."

Mr. Cobb looked very much disturbed.

The fingers of his right hand twitched as he drummed with them nervously on his desk.

"This—is—most distressing news," said the auctioneer, in an agitated voice.

"It is certainly not pleasant for me," replied Mr. Shaw decidedly. "I haven't so much money that I can afford to lose \$200."

"Are you sure when you were counting your money that you didn't drop the four fifties on the carpet? I'll go up with you and we'll search the room."

"I looked the carpet well over, but I saw no sign of the missing bills."

"I hope you don't think that I or any member of my family took your money?" said Mr. Cobb hastily, as he got up from his chair with the intention of going to the chamber and searching for the lost bills.

"I have accused no one in particular of taking it as yet," replied the visitor.

"Have you examined all your pockets carefully? You may have put those bills in a different pocket than you supposed."

"I have gone into all my pockets, and even looked the carpet and bed-clothes well over to make sure before I brought my loss to your attention. I am a careful man, and don't often go off half-cocked."

Silas Cobb requested his visitor to follow him upstairs to the room where he slept the preceding night.

They both made a thorough search of the room, but their efforts availed nothing toward bringing the missing bills to light.

"I can't imagine how you could have lost your money. You are sure that you placed those bills in your vest pocket?" said Mr. Cobb, placing an emphasis on the word vest.

"I am positive that I did," replied Mr. Shaw. "In any event, they are not in any pocket of my clothes."

This prompt reply caused Mr. Cobb to scratch his head in perplexity.

"And you are positive that you had those bills when you counted your money?"

"Certainly, or I should instantly have noticed their absence," replied the visitor impatiently.

While they were talking Mrs. Cobb went to the office to call them to breakfast.

Not finding them there, and hearing their voices up in the chamber, she climbed the stairway to inform them that the morning meal was ready.

Her sharp eyes detected that something was wrong.

"What's the trouble?" she asked curiously.

Her husband told her that Mr. Shaw had lost \$200 of his money during the night.

"For goodness' sake!" she ejaculated. "I hope he doesn't think that you stole his money, Silas."

"I haven't accused your husband, madam," replied the visitor.

"I should hope not," she answered vigorously. "Silas is that honest he wouldn't keep a penny if he found it on the street and could find its owner."

"It seems strange, Martha, where his money could have gone," said her husband.

Mrs. Cobb asked Mr. Shaw the same questions her spouse had already propounded to him and received the same answers.

"Have you seen Bob this morning?" asked the lady suddenly.

"No," answered Mr. Cobb.

"I heard him go downstairs at daylight, and I haven't seen nothin' of him since. It ain't usual for him to get up so early," she added suspiciously.

She went over to where the boy's clothes were hung on the wall.

"Why," she exclaimed, with a sort of acid surprise, "if he ain't dressed himself in his best suit. What does that mean?"

"It means he's gone visitin', I s'pose," grunted Silas Cobb.

"Gone visitin' at half-past four in the mornin'! Fiddle-de-dee! It's my idee he's gone for good. He's been threatenin' to do somethin' desprit for a month past."

"Why should the boy want to run away?" asked Mr. Shaw, in some surprise. "This is his home, isn't it?"

"Of course it's his home," snapped Mrs. Cobb. "And we've treated him jest the same as if he was our own son, hain't we, Silas?"

Her husband backed up her statement.

"Then I don't see why you should think he has run away just because he put on his best suit this morning and went out unusually early," said the visitor.

"Because I've suspicioned he meant to do somethin' like that. He hain't been no good about the place for over a month. I couldn't get him to do nothin'. He's got to be a lazy, good-for-nothin' boy, that's what he has," said the lady spitefully.

"He didn't look like a lazy boy to me—quite the opposite. In fact, I don't think that I ever saw a brighter and smarter appearing lad," replied Mr. Shaw, who was clearly prepossessed in Bob's favor.

"That's because you don't know him," snorted Mrs. Cobb, tossing her head.

"I'm not far wrong in my first estimate of a boy," replied the visitor, firmly but politely.

"Huh!" she sniffed. "It's my opinion Bob Keane saw you countin' your money last night, and noticin' that there was a lot of it he waited till you was asleep, got up and helped himself to a share of it. Then he laid his plans for leavin' at daylight afore any of us was up. He wouldn't have put on his best clothes if somethin' wasn't in the wind. You can't tell me nothin' about that boy. I've always suspicioned he was a sly one, and now I'm sure of it," and the lady nodded her head emphatically.

"Madam, I am sure you wrong the boy," protested Mr. Shaw warmly.

"Then who else could have taken your money? Mr. Cobb or myself wasn't in this room last night. We belong to the church and don't try to steal other folk's property."

"There's no more reason for accusing this boy Bob of taking my money than of suspecting your stepson who also slept in this room, and whom I saw watching me when I was counting the bills."

"The idea! Just as if Morris would think of takin' your money!" exclaimed Mrs. Cobb indignantly. "Morris is a good boy, Silas!" sharply, "why don't you defend your son?"

Mr. Cobb hastened to assure his visitor that Morris was one of the best boys in the county, and that stealing money was not in his line.

"I beg your pardon," replied Mr. Shaw hastily, seeing that he had stirred up a hornets' nest. "I did not intimate that I thought your son had robbed me."

"I should hope not," answered Mrs. Cobb vigorously. "Besides, Morris hain't put on his good clothes and run away. He was down in the yard when I come up here. If he stole your money he would have run away, wouldn't he?" she asked triumphantly, as a clincher to her argument.

"I think we had better go to breakfast," suggested the real estate man, who looked anxious and disturbed. "We can look into the matter afterward."

"I think so, too," said his wife emphatically. "The things will be stone cold, if they hain't already."

Accordingly Mr. Cobb led the way downstairs to the din-



ing-room, where the lady of the house hastened to dish up a round-steak, with fried potatoes and hot biscuits.

She called Morris, who appeared to be in a disconsolate humor, and then the four sat down to the morning meal.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### IN WHICH IT IS DECIDED THAT BOB KEANE IS A THIEF.

Although nothing was said at the table about the theft of the \$200, nevertheless Silas Cobb was doing some tall thinking on the subject.

If his visitor had really lost that sum of money, and there seemed to be little doubt but he had, he was satisfied that Bob was the person who had surreptitiously taken the four bills soon after the man had gone to sleep.

Why was Mr. Cobb so certain in his own mind that his nephew was the guilty party?

Let us explain.

On the preceding afternoon, while Bob was at Hilands awaiting the arrival of the 3:40 train from New York, Mr. Cobb met Fenton, the wagoner.

Fenton told him how he had seen Bob, at the risk of his life, rescue the little daughter of an early summer boarder at Jordan's, named Fairchild, from almost certain death, and that he had seen the grateful father tender the boy a roll of bills.

"Bob didn't seem inclined to take the money, as I drove off," Fenton said. "I thought he was a fool, but it wasn't any of my business."

"But he might have taken it after you left," said Silas Cobb eagerly.

"That's true. He might have done so. Have you seen him since morning?"

"Yes; but he didn't say nothin' to me about havin' a roll of money."

"Maybe he didn't want you to know anything about it."

"He hain't got no right to keep such a thing to himself. If he has a roll of money in his possession I have a right to know it. I'm his guardian, and the law says I must take care of all his property. I'm goin' to speak to him about it to-night."

It happened, however, that Mr. Cobb, being fully engaged with his visitor, found no chance to talk to his nephew on the subject.

He did not forget the matter, though.

Several times he asked himself if Bob really did get a roll of money from the grateful gentleman, and if so how much did it amount to.

It must be considerable—probably as much as \$100.

Finally Silas Cobb decided that he would wait till after Bob, his son and his guest had gone to bed and had had time to get to sleep.

Then he meant to go softly up to the chamber and search Bob's clothes for the money, which he more than ever believed he had.

But there were other forces at work that Mr. Cobb never dreamed of.

When Mr. Shaw was counting his money he noticed that Morris Cobb's eyes were on him.

He thought little of the matter and in due time dropped asleep.

Morris, however, didn't go to sleep as soon as he naturally would have done.

The sight of so much money in the visitor's vest interested him greatly.

He needed money badly himself, for his father seldom gave him a cent, and when he did it came from him like the drawing of a back tooth.

Here was a chance to get a good sum, and he thought without suspicion attaching himself, for he meant to get up before the visitor awoke and hide the money.

So, with this purpose in his mind, he waited for an hour listening to the man's deep breathing while he was trying to summon up enough courage to steal the bills.

At last he got out of bed, crawled softly to the visitor's bed, and as he had carefully noted where Mr. Shaw had hung his vest, he inserted his fingers into one of the pockets, felt the bills and hastily drew them out.

He had no idea how much the notes amounted to, nor did he care, but he guessed they represented a sum sufficient for his needs.

He returned to the bed, thrust them hastily into one of his trousers pockets, and after a while fell asleep.

Fifteen minutes afterward Silas Cobb came into the room like a shadow.

He went directly to the boy's bed, and taking up Bob's trousers searched them without success.

Then he thought maybe he had hold of his son's trousers by mistake, so he took up Morris' pants, and going through them his talon-like fingers closed on the bills.

With a grunt of satisfaction, he threw down the trousers and left the room.

When he got to his own room he examined the bills and saw there were four of them, each of the denomination of \$50.

"So this is what he got from that Mr. Fairchild, eh?" he muttered grimly. "Well, I guess I can take care of them better than he. I'll tell him to-morrow that I've got 'em, and that when he gets to be twenty-one, if he lives so long, he can have 'em back."

With this comfortable reflection, Mr. Cobb turned in for the night.

In the morning when Morris rushed behind the barn to count his ill-gotten money he was astonished to discover that the bills he had stolen had taken flight during the night.

At first he couldn't account for the mystery, but not seeing Bob anywhere about the premises, he came to the conclusion that Bob had not been asleep when he took the money; that he had seen him do the deed, and then foxily waited for him (Morris) to get asleep, when he had abstracted the money for himself.

"That's why he got up before me," snarled Morris furiously. "He knows I won't dare to squeal. Oh, the villain! I'd like to kill him!"

When Mr. Shaw reported his loss to Mr. Cobb, and stated that he had lost four \$50 bills, just what he (Cobb) had found in what he supposed was Bob's trousers, the real estate man became perplexed and nervous.

Was it possible that Bob had not received any money, after all, from Mr. Fairchild, but had deliberately robbed Mr. Shaw of the four bills?

It certainly looked that way, for Silas knew that neither he nor his wife had taken the man's money, and he did not even suspect his graceless son.

Mr. Cobb argued that Bob would return as soon as he discovered that the \$200 was missing from his pocket.

"He'll probably think he's lost it some way," chuckled the old man. "It won't do any good to have the constable arrest him and charge him with the theft, as nothin' can be proved agin him, since the money he evidently stole is in my pocket, and not in his."

As matters stood, it was clearly up to Mr. Cobb to make an explanation of the circumstances as he saw them, and restore the \$200 to Mr. Shaw.

There were two reasons, however, why Silas Cobb hesitated to clear up the mystery—the first was that he was ashamed to acknowledge to his visitor that he was mean enough to creep upstairs in the dead of night and go through his nephew's clothes in order to deprive the boy of money which he supposed he had earned at the risk of his life; the second was that Mr. Cobb, who loved money better than anything else in this world, was sorely tempted to take advantage of the mix-up to retain the \$200 in question, for he hated to give up a dollar once he got his fingers on it.

After breakfast the real estate man and his guest adjourned to the office.

There was one thing Mr. Cobb wanted to know before he finally decided whether he would hold on to the \$200.

Pointing to a chair, he cleared his throat and then asked the gentleman if he thought he would be able to recognize the missing bills if he saw them again.

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Shaw promptly. "The four bills were all issued by the same bank—the Manhattan National of New York City, and I have their numbers in my memorandum book. That is a precaution I always take when carrying bills of large denominations around with me."

This reply seemed to disconcert Silas Cobb, and for a moment or two he said nothing and drummed nervously on his desk.

"It is very strange my nephew should absent himself in such a mysterious way," he said presently. "I'm afraid—"

At that moment Mrs. Cobb burst into the office in a triumphant manner.

"What did I tell you? I know'd Bob Keane took that money. Come in here, Morris, and tell your father what Bob said to you in the post-office yesterday mornin'."

Morris, who was at his stepmother's heels, came forward and told his story.



He said that he and Bob had gone to the post-office the previous morning, and while there had seen a notice which stated that Hazen's Express route was for sale and could be bought for \$200.

"Bob said he wished he had \$200," went on Morris, maliciously, satisfied that his evidence would get his cousin into a peck of trouble, for he was sure Bob intended to use the money (which Morris supposed his cousin had taken from his trousers pocket while he slept) to purchase the express route, "so he could buy out the route and run it himself. He said he was certain he could make a raft of money."

"There, now," spoke up Mrs. Cobb, when Morris had concluded, regarding Mr. Shaw with a look of intense satisfaction. "I guess you'll believe what I say another time. I s'pose you know what's come of your money now. It's as plain as the nose on your face that that boy saw you countin' your money and made up his mind to get \$200 to buy that route. Why didn't he take the whole of your money while he was about it? Because he only wanted \$200. Now, mark my words, he's gone to Bloomfield, and has bought that outfit by this time. It's easy enough for you to go to that place, call on the Widder Hazen, and see if I hain't right. You'll find them four fifties of yours in her pocket. Then all you need do is to have the constable arrest Bob. He'll confess soon enough when he's in jail. After that the widder 'll have to give up the money and take her rig back."

Mrs. Cobb stated the case like a female lawyer, and she was as certain she was right as that the sun shone at that moment.

Things certainly did look black against poor honest Bob, who always prided himself as being on the square.

Even Mr. Shaw began to have some doubts, after all, concerning his estimate of the boy's character.

Mr. Cobb, however, chuckled to himself as he listened to his wife's deduction.

While he had little doubt but she was right in her conclusions, he knew that it would be only a waste of time to go to Bloomfield on an investigation tour, since the money on which Bob depended to buy the route was now in his uncle's possession; therefore it stood to reason, thought Mr. Cobb, that Bob, not having the price, could not buy the route.

Still if Mr. Shaw, influenced by Mrs. Cobb's logic, insisted on probing into the matter he (Mr. Cobb) would agree that it was the proper thing to do under the suspicious circumstances.

Until his wife had brought Morris forward with his story of the express route, Silas had been a bit puzzled to account for Bob's theft, as in his heart he had believed his nephew to be a thoroughly honest boy; but now he thought he saw the "nigger in the woodpile," and it strengthened a notion he had long entertained that the most honest people in the world will yield to certain temptations.

"Well," snapped Mrs. Cobb impatiently, "why don't you get busy, Silas? It's your place to hitch up Bony to the wagon and take Mr. Shaw to Bloomfield. I calculate he's anxious to get his money back."

As Mr. Cobb was ruled by his wife in every particular except in money matters, in which, fortunately for their domestic felicity, they were both of a mind, he got up and prepared to follow out her suggestion.

"You'd better take the constable with you, pa," Morris shouted after him, "or Bob 'll be sure to cut his stick when he sees you are after him."

Morris also had some intention of asking his father to let him go along, so he could enjoy the satisfaction of gloating over Bob when he was captured.

Mr. Shaw was the only one of the quartet, though he was the most interested in the recovery of the money, who had little heart in the journey.

He was a good-hearted man, and it made him sad to think that the boy who had so favorably impressed him by his honest face and upright talk was a mean thief.

It only went to show how little dependence could be placed upon personal appearances, and how a smooth tongue is one of the most deceptive things in the world.

The trip to Bloomfield, however, was not made after all.

As Mr. Cobb led his rig out of the yard and around to the front door who should he see driving smartly down the road, perched on the seat of Hazen's express wagon, but Bob Keane, and he looked as independent, too, as a hog on ice.

Silas Cobb was so startled he could only stand and stare open-mouthed as the nephew approached.

## CHAPTER IX.

### IN WHICH BOB FINDS HIMSELF IN A GRAVE FIX.

It was with an elastic step that Bob left the Cobb yard that morning, walked up Main street, and took the road to Bloomfield.

As he tramped along, his imagination was fired with rosy visions of the future, and he pictured to himself the satisfaction he would take out of being his own boss.

"I ought to make a good thing hauling the trunks of the summer boarders to and from Hilland's this season, and carrying some of the boarders, too. I can fix it with the farmers, who hate to hitch up a team to go all that distance to fetch a single guest, or perhaps two. They'd much rather leave the job to me. I can charge a quarter a head and a quarter for a trunk, and carry a whole lot of packages besides, for the Hazen wagon is a good-sized one, and covered at that. I dare say Uncle Silas will raise Cain at first, and will insist that I turn over all the money I get to him; but he's going to be disappointed. I'm ready to do the square thing by him—further than that, nixy. He's sat on me as long as he's going to, now I'm going to make a man of myself. I'm willing to pay him for the use of the stall next to Bony. In fact, I'm willing to trade the Hazen horse for Bony. That'll give uncle a decent-looking animal in place of the scarecrow he has; but I would feed Bony so full of provender that he'd soon lose all his angles and begin to look like a decent horse. I'm willing to stand the expense, and the guying I'll get at first, for Bony's sake, for I like the animal, and I know he feels that I am his only friend."

Thus figuring on the future, and building many air castles, Bob reached Bloomfield and directed his steps to the cottage of Widow Hazen, which was on the suburbs of the town.

It was seven o'clock when Bob knocked on Mrs. Hazen's door.

He announced his mission and was asked to walk in.

Mrs. Hazen and the little Hazens were at breakfast, and the boy was cordially invited to sit up at the table and partake of the frugal breakfast.

Bob politely declined on the score that he was in a hurry, so Mrs. Hazen took him out to her barn and showed him the horse, wagon and harness that went with the route.

The boy could judge a horse as well as an experienced dealer, and after a critical survey of the outfit decided that it was worth the money asked.

Many persons in the boy's place would have tried to beat the widow down in her price, and probably would have succeeded, as she needed the money badly, but Bob prided himself on being "on the square," and as he honestly believed the horse, wagon and good will of the route was worth more than Mrs. Hazen asked he scorned to resort to the dickering process.

"I'll take the route at your figure, Mrs. Hazen," he said finally.

The woman looked pleased and apparently relieved, for she had expected to have to take possibly \$25 off in order to make the sale.

"Who is it for?" she asked.

"For myself," replied Bob, in a business-like tone.

The woman looked a bit surprised.

"You seem young to run this business," she said. "How old are you?"

"Sixteen."

"Well, you look stout and hearty. Maybe you'll get along."

"Have you a list of Mr. Hazen's customers?"

"I have his memorandum book—that has all the names in it—which I'll let you have."

"Thank you, ma'am. We'll go back to the house now. I want you to make out a bill of sale—my name is Robert Keane—and then I'll pay you the money."

Mrs. Hazen made out the bill of sale in proper shape and handed it to Bob.

He passed over the four fifty dollar bills he received from Mr. Fairchild.

"Boys like you don't often have \$200 to invest in a business," the woman said with a smile.

She was of an unsuspicious nature, and did not dream of asking the boy where he got so much money.

"That's right, Mrs. Hazen. I only came into possession of that money yesterday by a piece of good luck," said Bob, and then he told her how he rescued Fanny Fairchild. "Her father wanted to give me \$500 outright; but I wouldn't take it. I don't believe in accepting money under these circumstances. I borrowed those four fifties from him because I



saw that the Hazen route was for sale and I wanted to get hold of it."

Bob did not take any special note of the bills, though he noticed that one of them was on the First National Bank of Albany, and that it had a red cross marked on the back.

The deal having been settled, Bob went back to the barn, hitched up the team and drove out of the yard.

He had asked Mrs. Hazen to direct him to a sign painter and she had told him he would find one next to the Times newspaper office on Main street.

Bob drove down there and arranged with the painter to put his name "Keane" in place of "Hazen" on the wagon, and the man promised to have it done when the boy returned from the restaurant where he was going to get his breakfast.

Before Bob left Bloomfield he bought a supply of oats for his horse and for poor, abused Bony as well.

Then he started off at a brisk pace for Newtown.

On the way back he prepared himself for the expected run-in with his guardian.

The prospect was not encouraging, but he intended to stand by his gun like a little man.

"If Uncle Silas gets too frisky I'll take up quarters at the Griswold farm. Dan said I could come over there any time I wanted to."

Comforted with the reflection that Silas Cobb didn't cut a great figure in the village, and that he could count on the sympathy and encouragement of the people of his neighborhood, Bob chirruped to his horse and felt as cheerful respecting the future as if he owned a farm.

He wouldn't have been quite so happy if he had known what was awaiting him at his uncle's home.

Morris noticed Bob's approach almost as soon as his father did, and he yelled to his mother to come out and look.

Bob was not much surprised at the sensation his appearance created, but he did not dream of the true reason therefor.

He stopped in front of the office and waited for his uncle to come up, for he wanted to have matters settled then and there, so he could tell where he stood.

"So you've got back, have you?" said Silas, not able to understand how the boy came to be in possession of the Hazen express wagon when, according to his point of view, he didn't have the money to pay for the outfit.

"Yes, sir," replied Bob cheerfully.

"I needn't ask if you have been to Bloomfield, for I see you have," said Mr. Cobb, eyeing the horse and wagon askance.

"Yes, sir; I went over this morning to buy the Hazen Express Route for myself."

Bob expected to see his uncle fly into a fit, but nothing of the kind happened.

Silas Cobb merely regarded him with a sardonic smile.

"Gee! I wonder what's in the wind?" muttered Bob, almost overwhelmed by his guardian's unexpected calmness.

"So you've bought Hazen's Express Route, have you?" replied Mr. Cobb, with a sneer. "I'raps you don't mind tellin' me where you got the money to pay for it."

"I have no objection to telling you, sir. I borrowed \$200 from Mr. William Fairchild, who is stopping up at Jordan's, yesterday morning."

"What's that?" roared the real estate man, hardly believing his ears.

Bob was so obliging as to repeat his words.

"Don't you believe him, Silas!" shrieked Mrs. Cobb, shaking her fist in the air. "He bought that there horse and wagon with the money he stole from Mr. Shaw."

Bob heard Mrs. Cobb's words in blank astonishment.

He thought she must have suddenly gone crazy.

Mr. Cobb knew that the boy hadn't used the money in question to buy the Hazen route because he (Cobb) had it in his pocket at that moment; but he judged that Bob had persuaded Widow Hazen to let him have it on credit.

Of course he didn't believe that Mr. Fairchild had loaned Bob \$200.

If he had, Mr. Shaw wouldn't have lost his \$200, because, according to his way of thinking, the temptation for Bob to steal the money would not then have existed.

Silas Cobb, however, was shrewd enough to see that he must act just as if he had not gone up to the chamber at midnight and abstracted that \$200 from the trousers he supposed belonged to his nephew.

"I am sorry, Robert," he said in a mild, hypocritical tone, "to find that you are a very wicked boy."

"Why, what do you mean?" demanded Bob, amazed at the turn affairs were taking.

"I mean that Mr. Shaw lost \$200 last night while he was asleep, and the evidence points to you as the one who took it."

"I took \$200 from Mr. Shaw while he was asleep last night!" gasped Bob, turning red with indignation. "That's simply ridiculous! I didn't even know that Mr. Shaw had \$200 about him."

"I wish I could believe you, Robert," replied Mr. Cobb, trying to assume a sorrowful look, "but things look pretty black agin you."

"Mr. Shaw," cried out Bob, energetically, "have you charged me with taking \$200 of your money?"

"No, Bob," replied the visitor, "I have not charged you with the theft, but I am sorry to say that appearances seem to fasten the guilt on you."

"What do you mean by appearances, sir?"

"Well, you left the house very early this morning, which your uncle's wife says was something unusual for you to do. When I got up I found that \$200 of \$500 I had brought with me from New York to pay down on the Chadwick farm was missing. Your cousin Morris says that you wanted \$200 very badly to buy out the Hazen Express Route. Well, you seem to have bought it. If you can satisfy me that you came honestly by that horse and wagon I have nothing further to say, and will apologize for having suspected you of taking my money."

"I can easily prove that the \$200 I paid this morning to Mrs. Hazen rightfully belonged to me," replied Bob, promptly.

"Do you mean to say that you paid \$200 in actual money to Widder Hazen this mornin' for that outfit?" gasped Mr. Cobb, who could not understand how such a thing could be, though the others could easily understand it.

"I did," replied Bob, while Mr. Shaw, Mrs. Cobb and Morris looked at Silas in some surprise.

Mr. Cobb saw he had made a bad break and covered it up by telling Bob that he hoped he could prove his words.

"Sure I can. If you and Mr. Shaw will jump in my wagon I'll drive you up to Jordan's, and you can put the matter up to Mr. Fairchild."

Bob appeared so confident that Mr. Cobb began to feel more puzzled than ever, and to experience an uneasy sensation.

"That's fair enough," admitted the visitor. "Come along, Mr. Cobb, it is only right the boy should have a chance to clear himself as speedily as possible."

Mrs. Cobb sniffed contemptuously, and said it was her opinion that Bob Keane was up to some trick, for since it was plain to be seen that he had stolen the money it was utterly impossible for him to show that Mr. Fairchild had given it to him.

However, Bob carried his point and drove his uncle and the visitor to the Jordan farm.

"I want to see Mr. Fairchild," said Bob to Mr. Jordan, when he reined the team up in front of the farmhouse.

"I'm afraid you'll be disappointed," replied the farmer.

"Why?" asked Bob.

"Because Mr. Fairchild and his daughter left for New York on the eight o'clock train this morning," was the unexpected reply.

## CHAPTER X.

### MORRIS AND HIS STEPMOTHER ARE DISAPPOINTED.

"Went away this morning!" exclaimed the boy in genuine amazement. "Why, Miss Fanny made me promise I would call and see her this afternoon"

"So she told me," replied Mr. Jordan, "and she left a note that I was to hand you when you came. I will get it for you."

"This is fierce," said Bob to Mr. Shaw, so earnestly that the gentleman felt he meant what he said. "As Mr. Fairchild is gone, it will be impossible for me to prove the statement I made to you. But he certainly loaned me the money that I paid to Mrs. Hazen."

"I am truly sorry the gentleman has gone," replied Mr. Shaw, and he really meant it, for he did not wish to believe that Bob was guilty of taking his money.

Silas Cobb was very much relieved to find that Bob could not show that Mr. Fairchild had given him \$200, because his ability to do so would have complicated matters exceedingly.

He made no remark one way or the other, and presently Mr. Jordan brought out the note and handed it to Bob.

The boy tore it open and read it eagerly.

It ran as follows:



"JORDAN FARM, June 16, 190—.

"DEAR BOB KEANE: Papa received a telegram from New York early this morning calling him back to the city on urgent business, and, of course, I have to go with him. I am very sorry to disappoint you this afternoon, but it cannot be helped. We expect to be back in a week, and then you and I must make up for lost time. Good-by. I shall never forget, nor will papa, that you saved my life yesterday. Please understand that we are both deeply grateful to you, and will be as long as we live. Yours sincerely,

"FANNY FAIRCHILD."

When Bob finished reading the note he handed it to Mr. Shaw, who glanced over and returned it.

"It is evidently not your fault," he said, "that we have failed to meet Mr. Fairchild; therefore I think you are entitled to the benefit of the doubt."

"Thank you, sir," answered Bob, gratefully. "You are a gentleman."

There was nothing more to be done at the Jordan farm, so Bob turned the wagon around and drove back.

On the road he learned all the particulars of the loss of Mr. Shaw's money.

"Well, sir, all I can say is that I didn't take it," he said earnestly. "It is a curious thing that you should happen to lose the exact amount that I paid for this outfit. That makes the affair look bad for me."

"That is true," replied Mr. Shaw; "but I think I see a way of proving your statement without the intervention of Mr. Fairchild."

"How?" asked Bob, eagerly, and Mr. Cobb was not less interested in the "way."

"I prefer to keep my plan to myself for the present," replied the gentleman, greatly to Bob's uncle's disappointment, if not uneasiness.

They found Mr. Cobb and Morris eagerly awaiting their return.

Noticing that Bob had lost something of his confident air, the lady immediately jumped to the correct conclusion that the mission had been unattended with results.

"Well," she exclaimed, with a triumphant air, "you found out that Bob was lyin' about Mr. Fairchild givin' him \$200, didn't you?"

"No, madam, we did not," replied the visitor, rather disgusted with the lady's insistence that Bob was guilty of the theft. "We found that Mr. Fairchild had been unexpectedly called to New York this morning."

"Then I'll bet Bob knowed about it, that's why he was so ready to carry you up to the Jordan farm. He knowed Mr. Fairchild warn't there."

To these unfriendly remarks the gentleman made no reply. He was beginning to shift his suspicions from Bob to the whole Cobb family.

Their eagerness to make out a case against the bright boy looked as if they had something to conceal themselves.

At least that is the way it now struck Mr. Shaw, and whatever plan it was he had hinted at he was more than ever determined to carry out.

"Well, Mr. Cobb," he said, dropping all further reference to his missing money, "let us go over and look at the Chadwick farm."

"Hain't you goin' to have that boy took up for stealin' your \$200?" asked Mrs. Cobb, in great astonishment.

"Not at present, madam," replied Mr. Shaw, coldly.

Both Morris and his stepmother looked their disappointment.

Silas Cobb appeared to be rather relieved than otherwise, for to tell the truth, he did not care for an official investigation of the case.

He hoped that his visitor might let the matter go by default.

He readily agreed to accompany Mr. Shaw to the Chadwick farm, and as Bony was still standing hitched to the wagon in front of the office, the two men got in and drove away.

Mrs. Cobb returned to the kitchen in a huff, but Morris remained outside eyeing with no kindly expression.

He was debating whether it was safe for him to accuse Bob of taking the \$200 out of the trousers pocket.

He decided that it was too risky, for he did not doubt but Bob would not only deny the act, but would immediately report him to Mr. Shaw, and this would put the burden of the guilt on him.

Of course he felt sure that the theft could not be brought home to him, but the bare suspicion that he was mixed up in

the matter would serve to help Bob out of his predicament, and he earnestly hoped that Bob would be eventually convicted, as, in his opinion, he deserved to be.

"I s'pose you're happy now," he finally said to Bob, with a sneer. "You managed to get the \$200 you wanted so bad, and you've bought the express route."

"And you think with your stepmother that I stole the \$200," flashed Bob.

"Well, you know whether you stole it or not," replied Morris, pointedly.

"I know it was loaned to me by Mr. Fairchild."

"You ought to be able to prove it, then."

"How can I when Mr. Fairchild has returned to New York?"

"What did he go to New York for at the very moment you want to see him? Looks funny to me. Just as funny as that Mr. Shaw should lose the exact amount that you wanted to pay for the express route."

"I don't deny but the whole thing looks queer; but it will come out all right in the end," said Bob, confidently.

"I hope it will," said Morris, nodding his head. "I hope the person that stole that \$200 will get showed up."

"I hope he will, too."

"Well, if he hasn't a nerve," thought Morris, as he turned on his heel and was about to re-enter the house, when he stopped and turned around. "What are you going to do with that horse and wagon?" he asked his cousin.

"What do you think I bought it for? To look at it?"

"You've got to keep it somewhere, provided my father'll let you keep it."

"I don't think he'll have anything to say about it."

"Why won't he? He's your guardian, if he objects to you having that horse and wagon he can take it away from you and sell it."

"No, he can't."

"Why not? What's to prevent him?"

"That horse and wagon practically belongs to Mr. Fairchild until I have paid him the \$200 I owe him."

"That's all rot. You're a minor and can't own nothing."

"That's just what I told you. The outfit belongs to Mr. Fairchild till it's paid for. Maybe it won't be paid for till I'm twenty-one," grinned Bob.

Not being able to answer that argument, Morris switched back again.

"Where are you going to keep your rig?"

"I'd like to keep the horse in our barn. I'm willing to pay your father for the accommodation."

"Maybe he'd let you if you swopped horses with him," grinned Morris.

"That would suit me," said Bob. "I'll give him this animal for Bony and a year's rent of a stall in the barn."

"You would?"

"I would."

"I'll tell him what you said; but before anything is done about it you'll have to prove that you didn't pay for the rig with Mr. Shaw's money."

"I expect to be able to prove that in a week."

"How will you?"

"Mr. Fairchild will probably return to Jordan's by that time."

"How do you know he will?"

"Fanny, his daughter, told me so in a note she left at Jordan's for me explaining the cause of their sudden departure."

Morris was satisfied in his own mind that Bob was bluffing, just as he was sure that Bob had taken the money which belonged to Mr. Shaw out of his pocket.

"You say Mr. Fairchild loaned you \$200?" went on Morris.

"Yes."

"How long have you known him?"

"I only met him once, and that was yesterday morning."

"And you had the nerve to ask him for the loan of \$200?"

"He offered to give me \$500."

"What for?"

"Saving his daughter from possible death."

"And you refused to take \$500?" said Morris, incredulously.

"Do you expect me to believe that?"

"I don't care whether you believe it or not," replied Bob, independently.

"Well, I don't," replied Morris, tartly, turning around and entering the house.

## CHAPTER XI.

### BOB STARTS IN TO DO BUSINESS.

Bob drove to the post-office and took down the "For Sale" notice put up in the interest of Mrs. Hazen.



In place of it he tacked up the following announcement, which he prepared in the store:

**KEANE'S EXPRESS.**  
(Formerly Hazen's.)

On and after the 16th day of June the undersigned is prepared to undertake the prompt delivery of all kinds of light cases, trunks, packages, etc., between Highland and Bloomfield, inclusive—two trips, morning and afternoon. Also, by special arrangement, to any point within a radius of six miles of Newtown and five miles of Bloomfield. Charges moderate. Address, Bob Keane, Newtown Post-office.

Duplicates of the above bill Bob tacked up in the Bloomfield, Darlington and Highland post-offices before night and gave an order to a Bloomfield printer for 250 circulars which he subsequently mailed to all the customers of the late Mr. Hazen and to every farmer within the limits of his route.

He carried his first freight that afternoon—a dozen crates of strawberries and four crates of asparagus from the Griswold farm to Highland station enroute to New York City.

At Highland he picked up a full load of general merchandise for Bloomfield.

He stopped at his home in Newtown to have a talk with his uncle about using the vacant stall next to Bony's in the barn.

"I can't make no arrangements with you until it has been settled whether you bought that outfit with Mr. Shaw's money or not, but you can use it to-night if you want to. Maybe the thing will be straightened up to-morrow."

"Where is Mr. Shaw?"

"He has gone to the hotel. Where are you takin' that load you got?"

"To Bloomfield."

"Well, you can't expect Mrs. Cobb to save tea for you. At any rate, I reckon she won't do no such thing."

"I shall have my supper in Bloomfield."

"You'll have to pay a quarter for it."

"I expect to."

"It's a waste of good money. Mrs. Cobb will get you somethin' to eat now if you'll give her that quarter. It's only right it should come to us. Are you goin' to turn over to me what you make?"

"We'll talk about that another time, Uncle Silas."

"I can look after any money you make better than you can yourself. You don't want to forget that I'm your guardian, and that if I think it's best to sell that horse and wagon that you claim to own the law will let me do it. The law is all on my side, so be careful that you don't get gay or somethin' might happen that you wouldn't like."

Mr. Cobb's words evidently veiled a threat, the meaning of which Bob could not fail to understand.

His uncle intended to assert his authority, if Bob was found to be the rightful owner of the express route.

He intended to demand an accounting of the business transacted each day, and would expect the boy to turn over to him every cent he collected from his patrons.

Of course Bob had no intention of yielding to any such arrangement.

As he expected trouble, he decided to consult Mr. Shaw on the subject, as that gentleman seemed to be friendly toward him.

With this idea in view he stopped at the small hotel and inquired for him.

He learned that he had gone to Bloomfield on business.

The business that took Mr. Shaw to Bloomfield was connected with the Widow Hazen.

He wanted to inspect the bills that the lady had received from Bob.

He could identify his own missing bills, therefore if the bills paid by the boy for the express business were not the bills in question, then Bob's story was true; if, on the contrary, Mr. Shaw recognized the bills received by Mrs. Hazen, then the boy had lied and he was guilty of the theft.

That was Mr. Shaw's little plan by which he hoped to ex-cooperate Bob, even if he failed to get a clew to his missing \$200.

When the gentleman reached the Hazen cottage he was disappointed to find that the widow had gone to Poughkeepsie the afternoon to visit her brother.

A young sister of Mrs. Hazen's was in charge of the house.

"Did you see the money that Mrs. Hazen received for the sale of her late husband's express route?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you describe the bills to me?"

"No, sir. All I remember is that there were four \$50 bills, and I think one of them had the name Manhattan National Bank on it."

This information was by no means conclusive, but it had two points against Bob—first that the bills were \$50 ones, and second, that at least one of them was on the Manhattan National Bank.

"When do you expect Mrs. Hazen back?" he inquired.

"The day after to-morrow."

"Did she deposit the money in a savings bank before she went to Poughkeepsie?"

"No, sir; she took the money with her."

"It is a matter of the greatest importance that I should see those bills before she disposes of them. Can you tell me where she is stopping in Poughkeepsie?"

The young woman gave her brother's address.

Mr. Shaw thanked her and left.

He immediately went to a telegraph office and sent a message to Mrs. Hazen, care of her brother.

Bob arrived in Bloomfield before dark and delivered his load of freight.

He had done pretty well on his first day, and was delighted with his success.

As soon as it became known that the express route was in the hands of a person who would conduct it along business lines he was satisfied he would get all the carrying he could handle.

Bob had his supper at a restaurant.

While eating he studied over his business plans for the future.

"If I'm going to carry out my running schedule as I have arranged it I've got to live at Bloomfield. It would only be a waste of time and energy to stay at Uncle Silas Cobb's place. I'd sooner pay my own way and get decent victuals and enough of them."

After supper he hunted up a small room, which he engaged to rent by the week.

He paid down \$1 for the first week and took possession of it.

He also found a place where he could keep his horse and wagon cheap.

After an early breakfast at the restaurant he drove to different places in Bloomfield looking for stuff to carry either to Highland or to places in the immediate neighborhood.

He caught two or three orders for nearby farms, and one for Newtown.

After delivering them he found a letter at the post-office from a farmer whose place was a mile outside the village asking him to call.

He drove out to the farm and found eight crates of berries and several of vegetables that the farmer wanted delivered to the railroad company at Highland.

Bob was glad to take the order, and his price for cartage was quite satisfactory to the shipper, who said he hoped the boy would make the business pay.

The boy drove past the Cobb home without stopping and saw his uncle Silas harnessing up Bony to the wagon.

"I wonder where he is going?" Bob asked himself.

## CHAPTER XII.

### SILAS COBB'S MISSION.

Silas Cobb was going to Bloomfield to call on the Widow Hazen.

His errand was to find out if his nephew had really paid her \$200 for the express route.

He could not understand how the boy could have done this, as the results of Bob's presumed theft was in his own pocket.

Still, if it proved to be a fact, it would substantiate his ward's story that he had received \$225 from Mr. Fairchild, though it would not, in his mind, relieve Bob of the guilt of having taken Mr. Shaw's \$200.

Silas had received a certain lecture from his wife the night before for not having insisted that Bob should be arrested and brought before the justice on the charge of stealing their visitor's money.

Mrs. Cobb insisted that as long as the thief was at large, and the bills unrecovered, a certain onus would rest on the family.

Mr. Shaw might privately think that one of the family, and not Bob, had stolen the money from him.

Silas Cobb therefore was in no pleasant humor when he hitched up Bony and started for Bloomfield.

When he arrived at the Hazen cottage he found to his surprise that Mrs. Hazen was in Poughkeepsie.



He wanted to know when she would return home, and was told she was expected the next day.

Silas Cobb looked at Mrs. Hazen's sister thoughtfully. "Do you know anything about the sale of the Hazen Express Route?" he asked her.

"I know my sister sold it to a boy named Robert Keane yesterday morning," was the reply.

"Do you know whether he paid her the \$200 she asked, or whether she let him have it on credit?"

"He paid her the \$200."

"Did you see him pay her?"

"Yes, sir."

Evidently Bob's story was true, then; but it was a puzzler to Mr. Cobb why the boy, with \$200 honestly acquired in his pocket, should then deliberately steal another \$200 for which he had no immediate use.

Silas Cobb's attitude, taken in connection with the visit of Mr. Shaw the preceding afternoon on a similar errand, somewhat alarmed the young woman.

"Is there anything wrong about that money?" she inquired.

"Why do you ask?" replied Mr. Cobb, who was not prepared to say whether the money was right or not.

"Because you are the second gentleman who has called about the matter."

"The second gentleman!" ejaculated Silas, nervously.

"Yes, sir."

"Who was the other man?"

"He said his name was Mr. Shaw."

A shock went through the real estate man's frame.

His visitor was evidently investigating the case on the quiet, and he didn't like to learn that.

"What did he want to know about the matter?" he asked, eagerly.

"He wanted me to describe the bills my sister received from the boy. He said it was of the utmost importance that he should know before she let them out of her hands."

"Did you describe them to him?" asked Mr. Cobb, anxiously.

"Not very well, sir, as I had taken very little notice of them. All I could tell him was that there were four \$50 bills—"

"Yes, yes," said Silas eagerly. "Four \$50 bills. What else?"

"And that one of them bore the name of the Manhattan National Bank."

"Only one of them?"

"I only noticed that one."

"Then you couldn't say whether the other three were also on the same bank?"

"No, sir."

"You say Mrs. Hazen is in Poughkeepsie?"

"Yes, sir."

"If I went to Poughkeepsie do you think I could see her?"

"I will give you my brother's address and you could call there. I am sure you would find her."

"Very well; let me have it."

Mr. Cobb wrote the direction down in his notebook.

"Did you, ahem! give her address to this Mr. Shaw?"

"Yes, sir. He asked for it."

That was another shock to the real estate man.

Mr. Shaw had stolen a march upon him, and he might already have seen the widow Hazen, or he even then on his way to see her.

He hastily took his leave of Mrs. Hazen's sister with the intention of losing no time in going to Poughkeepsie.

He hoped the lady had either banked the money or otherwise disposed of it, for he was more than ever anxious that Bob should not be able to establish his innocence.

If he found that Mrs. Hazen still had the bills about her, and had not yet seen Mr. Shaw, he would represent to her how foolish it was to carry so much money around and suggest that she bank them at once in Poughkeepsie.

While he was following out this line of thought some evil spirit whispered a brand-new suggestion into his willing ear.

If Mrs. Hazen had the four \$50 bills, why couldn't he, while waiting to examine them, substitute the four \$50 bills which he had taken from the boy's trousers?

He knew they were the bills his late visitor had lost, for Mr. Shaw had described them perfectly, while he asserted that he had a record of their numbers in his memorandum book.

Unless the widow's bills were new ones, which would block his little game, she would never notice the substitution.

Then he could impress on her the necessity of retaining them, or possibly by hinting strongly that the money

was believed to have been stolen by the boy who bought the route and that the bills might have to be shown in court.

"It's a splendid scheme," said Silas Cobb to himself, rubbing his skinny hands together with great satisfaction. "It's a splendid scheme, and I'll work it if she has the bills and Mr. Shaw hasn't yet called upon her. It will relieve me of the risk of getting rid of four bills which can be identified, while at the same time it will fasten the guilt on that young rascal."

It was a contemptible piece of business, though worthy of such a man as Silas Cobb.

The only excuse for it he could have offered was that he honestly believed Bob had stolen the money in the first place and ought to be punished for his crime.

He was simply aiding justice to accomplish its rightful mission.

As Mr. Cobb drove down Main street in Newtown, before stopping at his home to inform his wife that he was bound for Poughkeepsie on important business, he thought he would stop at the hotel and see if he could get a line on Mr. Shaw's movements that morning.

He found that the gentleman had left the hotel after breakfast without leaving word as to where he was going.

"He's surely gone to Poughkeepsie to see that woman," gritted the real estate man uneasily. "I'm afraid he'll get there before I will. In that case, my little scheme will go to waste. It's a shame to think that that boy may be able to evade the consequences he so richly deserves."

With this charitable feeling toward his nephew in his heart he drove on.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### A FIGHT TO A FINISH.

Bob Keane picked up several more crates of berries on his road to Highland, where he turned his load over to the railroad company for shipment to New York.

He then drove around the neighborhood and found that there would be nothing in his line until the afternoon.

"I s'pose I ought to return empty to Bloomfield in order to follow out my schedule, but I don't like the idea of doing that. I guess I'll let the schedule slide to-day. I'm hardly started yet in the business. I think I'd better run over to Poughkeepsie and see if I can't drum up some trade among those people who sell goods to the Bloomfield merchants. It will fill in time, and perhaps widen the scope of my operations."

Bob obtained permission to put his horse and wagon in a nearby shed till he returned from across the river.

It was about this time that Silas Cobb drove into Highland.

He put his team up at a small stable and walked down to the landing.

As he was crossing the tracks near the station he came face to face with Bob.

When one contemplates inflicting an injury on another person his feelings towards his victim is not usually of a very pleasant kind.

It was so with Mr. Cobb.

He was on the road to Poughkeepsie with the express purpose of trying to fasten the guilt of the \$200 theft on his nephew, and in so doing he was trying to persuade himself that he was performing a duty that he owed to the community.

"Let no guilty man escape," was his motto.

He was satisfied Bob was guilty, therefore the boy ought to be exposed and punished.

He had also worked himself up to the fever pitch of righteous indignation over Bob's action in buying out the express route without first consulting him.

The boy clearly proposed to break loose from his guiding strings.

He had as good as said that he was tired of the way things were going, and meant to alter them to suit himself.

This was rank rebellion, and Mr. Cobb did not propose to stand for it.

He had no objection to Bob running the route if he handed all his receipts over to him; but it looked very much as though his nephew had no intention of doing this.

The boy had actually squandered money on a supper, breakfast and bed at Bloomfield when he ought to have come home and paid that money over to him (Cobb).

Bob had carried a big load of stuff from Highland to Bloomfield, not to speak of the crates of berries which he had learned that he carried from the Grissell station; therefore the boy must have a tidy sum of



money in his clothes at the present moment which he would undoubtedly squander on more dinners, suppers and breakfasts, as well as beds, unless his legal guardian stepped in and prevented such a sacrilege.

Mr. Cobb therefore was fully resolved to lie in wait for the boy, after he returned home from Poughkeepsie, and get whatever money Bob had in his pockets away from him.

And he proposed to repeat that process on subsequent occasions if her nephew managed to keep out of jail.

If Bob still persisted in living away from home, and hid his money, then Mr. Cobb proposed to take the horse and wagon away from him and sell it, as he understood he had a perfect right to do.

Silas Cobb was thinking of his designs on his nephew at the very moment he ran into him at the station.

His face wore a savage look, the very intensity of which startled the boy.

The encounter was a surprise to both, but did not prevent Mr. Cobb from grasping Bob by the collar and dragging him into the waiting-room of the station.

"Now, you young villain," exclaimed Mr. Cobb, "I want you to give an account of yourself. Why didn't you come home last night?"

"Because it was more convenient for my business to stay at Bloomfield," answered the boy, who then jerked himself out of his uncle's hands and retreated to the other side of a small table covered with time-tables, and on which also stood a fair-sized package.

"It was, eh?" roared the now thoroughly aroused real estate man. "Well, I want you to understand that I won't have no such didoes as that. You had to spend somethin' for a bed and for your supper, as well as for your breakfast this mornin', didn't you?"

"I did," replied Bob, calmly.

"A rank waste of good money," groaned the miserly old man. "You would have saved all that by comin' home. How much did it cost you?"

"One dollar for a room——"

"One dollar for a room!" howled Mr. Cobb, dismayed at what he considered the extravagant price.

"Not for one night, but for a whole week," replied Bob, feeling almost like laughing at the expression on his guardian's face.

"Do you mean to tell me that you hired a room for a week?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then when you return to Bloomfield this afternoon you'll go right back to that place and tell them to refund you the rest of the money, as you don't intend to stay there no more."

"But I do intend to stay there right along," answered Bob sturdily.

"Don't tell me what you're goin' to do, you young rascal. You'll do as I say, d'ye understand? I'm your guardian, and what I say goes."

Bob thought it wise to make no reply to this outburst.

"You brought a load of fruit and vegetables to town yesterday, and took back a big load of general stuff, didn't you?"

"That's right," nodded the boy.

"You might just as well tell the truth, for I know all about what you're doin'," said Mr. Cobb, nodding his head energetically. "Well, you got paid for your haulin', didn't you?"

"I did."

"And you've got the money in your pocket now, haven't you, less what you squandered on your stomach and a bed?"

"Yes, sir," replied Bob, truthfully.

"How much money have you got now?"

Bob pulled out a roll of bills and began to count them.

Mr. Cobb's eyes fairly stuck out of his head as he watched the boy.

He seemed to be fairly made of money.

He couldn't wait for Bob to count the money, but gasped out hungrily:

"You didn't get all that money for carryin' stuff yesterday."

"No, sir."

"Then where did you get it? Have you been robbing some other man, you villain?"

"No, sir. I haven't robbed any one so far that I know of."

"You stole that two hundred dollars from Mr. Shaw, and I know you did."

"You seem very sure about it."

"I am. You tucked it away in your pants' pocket after you took it, and if it hadn't been for——"

Then Mr. Cobb shut up like a clam, for he suddenly realized he was saying too much.

"If it hadn't been for what, Uncle Silas?" asked the boy, eyeing him strangely.

"None of your business. You stole the money, but we haven't yet been able to prove it agin you. P'raps we will before long," shaking his head meaningly.

"I never stole a dollar from any one in my life," asserted Bob, indignantly.

"I don't intend to argue the matter with you here. I want to know now where you got all that money."

"Mr. Fairchild made me a present of most of it—twenty-five dollars in fact—to buy a suit of clothes."

"He did?" with a sneer. "Seems to me Mr. Fairchild is uncommonly liberal with his money, especially to you."

"He is a liberal man," replied Bob, warmly. "He offered me \$500 for saving his daughter, but I refused it."

"You refused five hundred dollars?" gasped his guardian, hardly believing the evidence of his senses.

"I did. I don't take pay for such a service as I rendered him."

"But you said yesterday that he gave you two hundred dollars and that you spent it for that express route."

"He loaned me two hundred dollars. It was only on those terms I would accept the money."

Mr. Cobb looked at Bob as if he was some new species of the human family.

This boy had actually refused to accept \$500 as a gift, but had accepted \$200 as a loan.

It was simply incomprehensible to him.

The sight of the roll of bills in Bob's hand, however, recalled his thoughts to the business in hand.

"Hand over that money to me," he said sharply, reaching across the table with the talon-like fingers in all eagerness to grasp it.

Bob drew back and returned the bills to his pocket.

"I'm going to use a good part of that money to buy a suit of clothes," he said.

"You're goin' to do nothin' of the kind. You don't want no clothes."

"I need them, all right. I'm using my best suit now for every day."

"You won't use them no longer when you get home to-night. You'll put on your other clothes. What d'ye think Mrs. Cobb would say if she knowed you was wrastlin' with boxes and packages and crates with them best clothes of yours?"

"I don't care what she'd say. This suit is none too good for every day."

"Are you goin' to hand that money over to me, or shall I take it from you?" demanded Silas Cobb, fiercely, making a move to get around the table.

"I don't think either will happen," retorted Bob, rather defiantly.

"You don't, eh? Then I'll show you, you young villain!"

With that Mr. Cobb, with unusual agility, sprang around the table after the boy.

Bob had no idea of being caught, so he made a dash to escape around the other end of the table.

He would easily have got away if he hadn't stumbled.

Before he could recover himself his uncle had him by the collar once more.

"Let me go, Uncle Silas," cried Bob, backing up against the side of the table.

"I'll let you go when I've got that money," replied Mr. Cobb, in a tense tone, trying to get his disengaged hand into the boy's pocket.

Bob was alarmed for the thirty-odd dollars he possessed, for he knew if his guardian once got his fingers on it he might as well say good-by to it.

While he was quite willing to concede his uncle's legal right to take care of his money, he did not care to let him enjoy that right if he could prevent it.

It might be law for his guardian to take his property, but under the circumstances it would not be justice.

So he put up a mighty game fight in its defence.

He did not intend to go back and live at Mr. Cobb's home, because from past experience he knew only too well what kind of treatment he might expect to receive there.

Ever since he came under the Cobb roof-tree he had been half-fed and half-clothed, in spite of the fact that he was heir to \$10,000.

That programme would be continued in the event that he yielded to his uncle's demands, but he didn't intend to yield.

To maintain himself in independence he needed money.

If Mr. Cobb deprived him of that he would be helpless.

Therefore he fought tooth and nail to prevent him from doing so.



Silas Cobb was equally determined to have his own way.

The sight of so much money in his nephew's hands had roused his cupidity to the boiling-point.

He would have it if he half-choked the boy in order to get it.

Mr. Cobb was not a very powerful man, as he was small and spare in stature; but when his passions were aroused, as on the present occasion, he was a dangerous opponent for a boy like Bob.

The boy's back was against the table, and in his desperate efforts to release himself he had doubled himself up under it.

When Mr. Cobb bent down to get at his pocket, Bob tried to squirm out of his grasp, and when he discovered that he couldn't do that he tried to rise up, whereupon his uncle gave him a violent shove, which resulted in unfortunate consequences—the table tipped over and everything upon it slipped off on the floor.

This so far as the time-tables were concerned amounted to nothing; but the package, which had been standing on the table, was a horse of another color.

It struck the boards with a crash, split open and spread the fractured parts of an elegant table lamp for several feet around.

At that moment the owner of the package appeared on the scene.

He saw the ruin of his property and fairly gasped with rage.

He was a big man, too, and consequently presented a formidable appearance.

Rushing forward, he seized Mr. Cobb, who had let go of Bob, by the arms and shook him violently, as a terrier might a rat.

"What do you mean by upsetting that table and breaking my lamp?" he demanded furiously of the real estate man.

"I—I—" gasped the frightened Silas.

"Pay me for it at once, or I'll hand you over to an officer. Pay me twenty dollars instantly or to jail you go."

Bob took advantage of the situation to make good his escape.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

A number of people were attracted to the waiting-room of the station by the racket.

The owner of the broken lamp was so mad that he had very little mercy on the hapless real estate man.

He started to drag him to the station door when several of the newcomers interfered, saying that it was a shame for a big man like him to intimidate a small person like Mr. Cobb, who looked pale and frightened.

"But look at my lamp!" exclaimed the irate man. "A twenty dollar lamp gone to blazes, and all this man's fault."

"No, no!" whined Silas Cobb. "It wasn't my fault. It was the boy's."

"What boy?" asked several. "There's no boy here."

"He ran away after pushing the table over."

"You mean after you pushed him against the table," growled the man whose lamp had been smashed. "Are you going to pay for that lamp or are you not?" he cried threateningly.

Silas would sooner have risked a beating than have parted with one of his darling dollars.

Seeing an opening in the small crowd, he made a sudden break for the door.

"Stop him!" roared the man, starting in pursuit.

No one, however, made any attempt to stop Mr. Cobb, who flew for the ferryboat, which was on the point of putting out.

He succeeded in reaching her just in time to get aboard, while the big man was shut out.

Shaking with fear, he made his way to the other end of the boat, and there he remained until the boat reached the other side of the river and glided into her slip, when he went ashore and walked up the street, much relieved to know that he had shaken off his formidable antagonist.

He consulted his notebook for the address of the house where Mrs. Hazen was stopping, and then asked a policeman to direct him to the street.

The officer pointed out a street car and told him to take that and ask the conductor to let him off at the nearest corner to the street mentioned.

He followed these directions to the letter, as he was a very obedient man, and in a short time he was ringing the bell at the address given him.

It happened that at the time Mr. Cobb came up the steps Mrs. Hazen was engaged with another visitor named, Mr. Kenwick Shaw.

Mr. Shaw had come down on the boat ahead of the real estate

man; consequently he reached Mrs. Hazen's brother's abode half an hour ahead of Mr. Cobb.

He explained his mission to the widow, and as she still had the bills in her possession that she received from Bob Keane, she got them for Mr. Shaw to look at.

He saw at once, and to his credit we will say, much to his satisfaction, that the four fifties were not the bills he had lost.

One of them was on the Manhattan National of New York; the others on different banks of other cities—the most noticeable being the First National of Albany on account of the red cross on its back.

The widow had watched the examination of the bills with some anxiety.

"Is there anything the matter with this money, sir?" she asked, nervously.

"No, madam, the bills are perfectly good. The fact of the matter is that four fifty-dollar bills were stolen from me, and the boy who paid this money to you was accused of the theft. I came here to see if I could identify those bills as the ones I lost. Though I really can't afford to lose two hundred dollars, still I am bound to say that I am glad those are not my bills, for I have taken a liking to young Keane, and I would not like to discover that he really was the thief. He says he got the bills he gave you from a rich gentleman named Fairbanks, to whom he rendered a signal service, and it seems evident that he told the truth."

"I remember he told me that he saved the life of the gentleman's daughter," said Mrs. Hazen.

"That's quite true, madam. He is a brave lad and an enterprising one, too. I am very much obliged to you for your kindness in permitting me to look at these bills," he said, handing them back to her. "I will now take my leave."

As he rose to go he happened to glance out of the window, and to his great astonishment he saw Silas Cobb walking up the steps to the front door.

"What has brought him here?" Mr. Shaw asked himself. "It must be that he, too, has come to get a look at these bills. If he expects to criminate his nephew with them he'll be greatly mistaken. Madam," he said, turning to the widow, who was about to answer the ring, "if I mistake not this visitor has come on the same errand as myself. As he is the boy's uncle, and not favorably disposed to him, I should like to be present at your interview with him, but without his knowledge."

The widow hesitated, but finally pointed to the tapestry curtains which separated the little parlor from the room beyond.

"You may stand behind those, sir. I trust I am doing right in permitting you to do this."

"You may place every confidence in me, madam," said Mr. Shaw, hurrying to conceal himself.

A moment or two later the widow ushered Silas Cobb into the parlor.

"My name is Cobb, ma'am—Silas Cobb, of Newtown."

The widow bowed and asked her visitor to be seated.

"I have called in relation to the sale of your late husband's express business to my nephew, Robert Keane. You see, ma'am, the night before you sold the horse and wagon to him a visitor I had stoppin' at my house was robbed of four fifty-dollar bills. He slept in the same room with the boy, and Mrs. Cobb and me is afeard that our nephew took the money out of his clothes, for it can't be found nowhere about the room. It is a very suspicious circumstance, ma'am, that next mornin' the boy goes to you and buys your husband's business for the identical sum that the gentleman lost."

The widow acknowledged that the circumstance looked suspicious.

"What is the name of the gentleman who lost the money?"

"His name, ma'am, is Kenwick Shaw. He ain't been here, has he, to look at the bills?"

This was somewhat of an embarrassing question for the widow to answer under the circumstances, and in order to avoid answering it she pretended to see something out of the window.

When she returned to her chair Mr. Cobb did not repeat the question, much to her relief, taking it for granted that Mr. Shaw had not yet showed up.

"I hope your nephew didn't steal the money," she said, with apparent concern.

"I'm afraid, ma'am, that he did," said Mr. Cobb, with a solemn look. "It is very sad to think that a boy of his, I might almost say, tender years should be guilty of such a wicked deed. Mrs. Cobb and me have brought him up with the best of care, but it ain't our fault if he has turned out bad. He is a most unfortunate boy, and I reckon it's best to let



worse sin on the calendar. Have you got them bills the boy paid you, Mrs. Hazen?"

"Yes, sir. Do you wish to examine them?"

"Yes, ma'am; I shall look upon it as a favor if you will let me see them."

The widow produced them from her pocketbook.

"I suppose you have examined these bills carefully, ma'am, and know what banks they're on?" asked the wily old miser, as he adjusted his glasses upon his nose.

"No, sir; I only looked at the figures."

"Hum?" ejaculated Mr. Cobb, spreading out the bills on his knee. "Would you mind raising that blind a bit, ma'am?"

Mrs. Hazen complied with his request, and the instant her back was turned the artful old rascal quickly substituted the four stolen fifties for the ones the widow had received from Bob.

He made the change in a pretty slick manner, but as the concealed Mr. Shaw was looking directly at him when he did it he saw the whole thing.

"So," muttered the gentleman behind the curtains, "it is just as I suspected. Mr. Cobb was the thief himself, and is now trying to fix the guilt on his ward. The contemptible rascal! It is mighty lucky for both Bob and myself that I managed to anticipate Mr. Cobb's visit here."

"Well, ma'am, I can't say positively that these are the identical bills that Mr. Shaw lost," said Silas, hypocritically; "but I believe they are. However I dare say the gentleman himself will be over here shortly and will be able to identify them perfectly. In the interests of justice, ma'am you must hold them for the present. If my nephew should be arrested, as I consider probable, these bills will have to be produced in court."

"But I wish to change one of these bills to-day. I want to use the money," she said.

"You must not do it, ma'am. It might enable my nephew to escape his just deserts."

"You seem anxious to have the boy punished," said the widow, in an indignant tone. "I should think that, as his uncle, you would rather wish to screen him."

"Justice must be done, ma'am, though the heavens fall," said Mr. Cobb, sanctimoniously.

"Well, sir, I must say that Robert Keane does not look like a thief. I think you may find that you are wrongfully suspecting him."

"I think not, ma'am. The evidence all points to him. It will be conclusive if them bills he paid you are the same ones that Mr. Shaw lost."

"I hope the really guilty person will be discovered," said Mrs. Hazen.

"I hope so, ma'am, with all my heart," coincided Silas Cobb.

"You shall have your wish, Mr. Cobb," said Mr. Shaw, stepping from behind the curtains. "I accuse you of the theft of my two hundred dollars, and I think I shall have no difficulty in bringing the matter home to you."

## CHAPTER XV.

### UNDER MR. SHAW'S THUMB.

To say that Silas Cobb was fairly paralyzed by the unexpected appearance of his late visitor would not exaggerate the situation.

He stared at Mr. Shaw with open mouth and starting eyes.

His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a sound to save his life.

Mr. Shaw regarded the miserly old man with silent contempt for a moment or two, then he spoke, while the widow Hazen looked at them both with surprised attention.

"You're a nice man to be the guardian of a decent boy, when my word you are. You ought to be arrested for conspiracy in attempting to fasten the crime of theft upon an innocent lad. However, I shall have you arrested for stealing my two hundred dollars, and I think that will answer just as well."

"What? what?" gasped Silas Cobb, turning white and trembling in every limb. "Have me arrested for stealin' your money?"

"Most decidedly."

"No, no, no!"

"And I?" smiled Mr. Shaw, sardonically. "Mrs. Hazen, will you please look at these bills you hold in your hand and tell me if they are the same ones you showed me a little while ago?"

The miserly old man, who had been so sure of the substitution so

cleverly accomplished by Mr. Cobb while her back was turned, obeyed Mr. Shaw's request with some surprise.

"Why, no," she replied, much astonished. "These are different bills."

"How do you know they are different?"

"Because they are all on the one bank, while those I showed you were on different banks, and one of them had a cross in red ink on it. I don't understand—"

"Of course you don't understand, madam, because you didn't see the bit of sleight-of-hand that this man performed when you went to raise the blind at his request. He substituted four other bills for the four you received from Bob Keane, and the four he substituted are the four that were stolen from me in his house."

"It's a lie," whined Mr. Cobb.

"Is it? Mrs. Hazen, I want you to witness the fact that I identify the four bills that you now hold as the four that belong to me and to make the identification complete," taking his memorandum book from his pocket, "I will read off the running numbers on each of those bills."

Whereupon he read the numbers, at the same time requesting the widow to note if the numbers he read corresponded with those on the bills, and she admitted that they did in each particular.

"Now, Mr. Cobb, you will please produce the four bills that Mrs. Hazen showed you when you asked her to let you examine the bills that your nephew paid her for the express route."

Silas Cobb, though driven hard and fast into a corner, did not want to comply.

"If you don't do as I say I will send for a policeman and place you under immediate arrest."

Mr. Cobb then brought forth the bills, and Mrs. Hazen identified them as the ones she had received from Bob Keane.

"Now, Mr. Cobb," said Mr. Shaw, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"I didn't steal your money," he said in quavering tones. "I took them bills of yours from my nephew's pockets on the night you was robbed."

"That's a very pretty story, indeed," replied Mr. Shaw, incredulously. "Do you think a jury would believe that in the face of the circumstantial evidence against you? Not on your life."

"But it is the truth!" cried Mr. Cobb, so earnestly that his accuser decided to ask him to explain his side of the case.

Then Mr. Cobb, with many protestations of his innocence, told his story as the reader knows it.

Mr. Shaw listened to it patiently and felt that the man might be telling the truth.

"You say you took those bills from Bob Keane's trousers?" he asked.

"I did."

"How do you know that those trousers belonged to your nephew? Might they not have been your son's trousers? The boys were sleeping together, and their clothes were not far apart."

Silas Cobb was not a little startled at this suggestion.

Such a contingency had not occurred to him before.

"My son wouldn't steal your money," he replied doggedly.

"How do you know he wouldn't?" asked Mr. Shaw shortly.

"Are you willing to go into court and swear that those trousers you handled were your nephew's?"

Mr. Cobb hemmed and hawed, and finally admitted that he couldn't swear to that fact.

"Your son is the guilty one, you can take my word for it. I saw him looking at me when I was counting the money, while Bob Keane seemed to be asleep. It seems plain to me just how the case is. Your son stole my money and put it in his trousers, intending to hide it in the morning. After he fell asleep you came upstairs, as you have described, went to the boys' bed, picked up the wrong trousers, found the money you supposed Bob had received from Mr. Fairchild, and carried it away with you. On the strength of that you have believed your nephew guilty. Why didn't you tell me all this in the morning; then this trouble would have been avoided. No, you thought you saw the chance to keep my \$200 yourself by throwing suspicion on your nephew. But the most contemptible part of all is your act of calling here on Mrs. Hazen for the purpose of changing the bills, so that when I saw them later I would naturally identify them as the ones I lost. Fortunately I was ahead of you, and your miserable scheme has reached up to a dead end."

Silas Cobb was overwhelmed by the situation he now found



He looked as mean as he felt, and had nothing to say in his own defense.

"Now look here, Mr. Cobb, I'm going to have a talk with Bob Keane. It's my opinion he's not over-anxious to have you continue as his guardian—certainly, after your present conduct, I think you are an unfit person to have charge of his property. If I find he is really disposed to cut loose from you, I am going to help him do so."

"You can't do nothin'," snarled the real estate man. "I'm his guardian accordin' to law, and I'm goin' to remain so."

"Now just listen to reason a moment, Mr. Cobb. All Bob will have to do is to petition the Probate Court to remove you as his guardian and appoint another. He can make his own selection, and if the court approves of the person he will be appointed in your place. I have no doubt but Mr. Fairchild, being grateful to the boy for saving his daughter, will accept the trust, and he is evidently a proper person, you will have to admit."

Mr. Cobb remained silent and dejected.

He was no fool, and easily perceived the force of Mr. Shaw's remarks.

But it was a terrible blow to him to contemplate giving up the profits he was earning out of the boy.

He wanted to fight against it tooth and nail, but Mr. Shaw had him where the hair was short, and could expose him to the contempt of the community in which he lived if he opposed the plan.

"What are you goin' to do about your \$200?" he asked suikily.

"That depends on yourself. If you make no further trouble for Bob I'll agree to let the whole matter drop just where it is. I have my money back. I'll let you make your commission on the farm, which I have about decided to buy, and no one outside of Bob, Mrs. Hazen and myself will be any wiser as to your conduct in this matter. Is that a bargain?"

Much against his will, Silas Cobb agreed to the condition.

"For fear you might change your mind I'm going to have all these bills fully identified before a notary, and I shall also take a sworn statement of the circumstances from Mrs. Hazen. I guess that will hold you down pretty tight. I think that is all now, so we will not detain you any longer."

Mr. Cobb took up his hat, and, without a word, left the house a sadder and wiser man than he entered it.

He proceeded straight to the ferry and boarded a boat for Highland.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY.

Bob Keane reached Poughkeepsie on the boat ahead of Silas Cobb, and immediately started to look up the few customers who had occasionally patronized the late Mr. Hazen's country express.

The boy interviewed them all, and impressed them with his business-like ways and progressive ideas.

He received enough encouragement to feel satisfied that his trip across the river had not been wasted.

The ferryboat was on the point of leaving her slip for Highland when Bob rushed on board.

In his eagerness to reach the front of the boat he began pushing his way through the crowd at the entrance to the men's cabin.

It sometimes happens that "the more haste, the less speed."

It was so in the present case.

In his hurry Bob didn't notice that somebody had laid a small, heavy, japanned box on the deck.

His foot caught on it and he stumbled headlong against a small, spare old man whose back was toward him.

"I beg your pardon," began Bob, as he picked himself up. "I didn't—"

Then he stopped short aghast, for he was face to face with the one man of all others he least desired to meet at that moment—his guardian, Silas Cobb.

"You young rascal!" exclaimed his miserly relative. "You did that on purpose. You want to kill me, you little villain!"

He looked so aggressive and sour that Bob thought it was the part of wisdom to get out of his way.

As he drew back Silas made a grab at him, with some purpose in his mind.

The boy, believing his uncle intended to get back at him for the trouble in the station waiting-room, turned as quick as a flash and darted back the same way he had come.

Silas Cobb, once upraised, followed in full chase.

The boat had already started out of the slip, but Bob,

measuring the intervening space with his eyes, took a flying leap and landed safely with both feet on the dock.

Mr. Cobb stood behind the iron guard rail and shook his cane at the boy as the boat receded from the dock; but Bob didn't mind that exhibition for a cent now that his guardian couldn't reach him.

The boy hung around the neighborhood until the boat returned from Highland, when he boarded her and in due time reached the other side of the river.

Before he landed he cast a wary eye around, thinking his uncle might be on the watch for him.

He saw no sign of him and hurried ashore.

He went to the place where he had left his horse and drove to the store, the owner of which had engaged him to take a load of furniture to a house on the suburbs of Bloomfield.

The employees of the establishment loaded the stuff on his wagon in the most approved fashion that would economize space, and then Bob started for his destination in good spirits.

Before he had gone very far he was overtaken by Mr. Shaw, who was driving a rig which he had hired in Newtown.

The gentleman told Bob that the stolen money matter had been fully cleared up, that he had got his \$200 back, but he would enter into no explanation just then.

He made an engagement with the boy to call on him at the hotel in Newtown that evening, when he said he would make everything clear to him.

After Bob had had his supper he walked in to Newtown to keep his engagement.

"Now, Bob," said Mr. Shaw, "do you wish to remain under Mr. Cobb's control?"

"No, sir," replied the boy emphatically. "He threatened to-day to take my horse and wagon away from me and sell it unless I gave him every cent I took in."

"Then I will assist you in the matter of a new guardian. When do you expect to see Mr. Fairchild?"

"I expect he and his daughter will return to Jordan's in a week."

"Then we will let the thing stand until we can speak to him about it. I am sure he will take a great interest in your future welfare."

Four days later Mr. Fairchild and Fanny came back to the farmhouse, and the girl welcomed Bob like a brother, and as the truest of friends.

Bob introduced Mr. Shaw to Mr. Fairchild, and then the lad's future was fully discussed, with the result that at the next session of the Probate Court Silas Cobb was removed and Mr. William Fairchild appointed Bob's guardian, a change that the boy relished greatly.

Keane's Express Route acquired an enviable reputation and became a very profitable business under Bob's skillful management, so much so indeed that he had to put a second wagon on before the summer was over, which wagon was driven by Dan Griswold, who preferred that work to farming.

Bob purchased Bony from Cobb, fed him up and made a new horse out of him, and we have no doubt but the animal felt an infinite gratitude to the boy as long as he lived.

During the ensuing winter Bob arranged with Dan to carry on the route for him, for one wagon could attend to all the carrying during cold weather.

Bob himself went to New York and attended school there.

He lived at the Fairchild home near Central Park until late in the spring, when the increasing business of his express route called him back to Ulster County.

That summer Fanny spent altogether at Jordan's, so as to be near the boy she had learned to think a great deal of.

This is Bob's third season with his express, and he is doing finer than ever, having quite a comfortable bank account in Bloomfield.

He is eighteen years old, and a fine, handsome young man.

Fanny is proud to be seen in his company, and thinks there is not another boy in the world who can hold a candle to him.

Unless she should change her mind in the near future it seems pretty certain that Bob will eventually handle a big share of the Fairchild money through Fanny.

Next week's issue will contain "AFTER A FORTUNE; OR, THE PLUCKIEST BOY IN THE WEST."

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## CURRENT NEWS

Vast expanses of grazing land and immense forests await exploitation in the northwestern part of Paraguay, known as the Gran Chaco, which is inhabited mostly by nomadic tribes of Indians. It is estimated that Paraguay has a population of 1,000,000.

Tom Smith, a farmer residing near Warsaw, Ind., lost a valuable cow as the result of his poor marksmanship. Angered by the constant raids of chicken hawks, Mr. Smith took down his old mule and went out to make a killing. He missed the hawk but hit his cow, which was grazing near by.

After a day's fishing by ten of the best local fishermen armed with the latest equipment for fishing, and securing no results. Walter Cooper, eleven years old, of Sabetha, Kan., with a penny's worth of fish-hooks, a can of angle worms, and a ball of twine fished in the same pond and captured a string of twenty-two.

The motion-picture ribbon is the only unit that is standard in every country, according to a statement made recently before the University Club in Washington by C. Francis Jenkins. He pointed out that railway gauges, for example, vary in different countries; that units of value, volume, length, weight all differ, "but the motion-picture film is the same the world over."

A garbled case resolved itself into a fable encounter in Judge Reiland's Court at Indiana Harbor, Ind., recently, when L. W. Sarr and Marcus Herschovitz, lawyers, passed the lip. The court refused to call time. In fact, Judge Reiland adjourned court to give the belligerents all the time they wanted. They took ten minutes and then an adjournment was declared and Judge Reiland went on with the trial of the case. Sarr looked as though he had fought it with a bearcat.

The hundred dollars is the amount asked by Frank Wronowicz, a Pole, for the loss of a mustache, in a suit filed against A. D. McClurich and Gus Bagley, of Bartlesville, Okla. All are smelter workers. Wronowicz was ordered to quit drinking out of a pail of water after workers used to use a cup or cut off his mustache. The Pole did not heed the warning. Then some of the men threw Wronowicz to the floor and scraped his mustache.

"Uncle Matt" McWhorter, eighty-nine years old, and one of the pioneer officers of Duke County, and Miss Clara Hines, seventy years old, of Higginsville, Mo., were married at the Court house, Greenfield, Mo., recently. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. William Shaw of Cassville. The young bride arrived at Lockwood, where she will now live, on a train. "Uncle Matt" was at the station to meet her. Within a few hours "Uncle Matt" had changed a new set of clothes, and, engaging an automobile, set out for Greenfield.

Provision for an effective patrol of the ocean along the east coast has been made by Canada and Newfoundland to prevent the Germans establishing submarine bases in these regions. Recent reports in the Canadian and American press that Germans were planning to extend the range of their undersea vessels to the St. Lawrence route have been taken seriously. There is now so much field ice in the North Atlantic that submarine craft probably would not venture into these waters, and if later fishing vessels on the Grand Banks and a great number of smaller boats will make difficult their approach.

Joe Oeschger, the former Philadelphia National pitcher who was obtained from Manager Moran on an optional agreement, pitched a no-hit-no-run game for Providence against Toronto in the International League series July 14. Rain fell intermittently throughout the closing innings, making the performance all the more remarkable. Providence won by only one run, and Oeschger scored that tally. Only twenty-seven batsmen faced him and but one man reached first base, Luque, the Cuban, drawing the only pass in the ninth inning, and he was thrown out on an attempted steal.

When the German army moved in and took possession of Laon last fall they found a curious shortage of wine in a section of France where wine ordinarily is about as plentiful as water. Then one day a French shell landed inadvertently on what appeared to be the grave of a French soldier, and its explosion was followed by the sound of breaking glass. The Germans investigated and found that the "grave" was in reality a small wine cellar. The French had merely buried their wine and erected a cross to disarm suspicion. A careful scrutiny of the numerous "graves" around Laon kept the hospitals supplied for some time, but eventually the supply again gave out.

Probably none of the countries at war, not even Germany herself, entered the conflict with such a clearly-defined plan of campaign and so perfectly prepared with the means to carry it on as did Italy. The redemption of the lost territory has been the dream of Italian statesmen and soldiers for half a century—a fact which was perfectly well known to Austria, who had strengthened by every artificial means of a military character the naturally strong defenses afforded by her mountain-ribbed frontiers. The Italians were well aware that there was but one way to break through the fortified passes of the Alps and across the strongly defended river Isonzo, namely, by the battering power of heavy and well-served artillery. The steady progress of Italy in the extremely difficult task she has set herself would indicate that the stories we have heard of the excellence of the Italian artillery are well founded. Thus far, the campaign would seem to have been one of heavy howitzers in which the numbers of infantry engaged, relatively to the other theaters of war, have been small.



# JOLLY JACK JONES

—OR—

## KNOCKING ABOUT THE WORLD

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

### CHAPTER XIX (continued)

And Jack told all.

Mr. Lozee listened with deep attention.

"I see," he said at last. "They held me a prisoner. They wanted to get me to sign a will in that woman's favor, and then they would have killed me, and she would have been free to marry Shellboyer. This began when I started in to find my daughter by my first wife, who has been missing many years. Jack, I am worth over sixty million dollars. It is a stake worth working for. You say that I disappeared from Cleveland over a year ago?"

"That's what I understand, sir."

"It seems but yesterday. My wife inveigled me here under pretense of benefiting my health, and here I have been ever since. My mind is weak, but I am no longer insane. The blow on my head has restored my reason. Help me, boy, and I will make you a rich man—richer than you ever dreamed. Listen. Get me safely out of this and take me to New York, and I promise to investigate your story. If it proves true and after a year or two you prove faithful to me, I will adopt you as my son, and make you my heir."

Jack caught his breath.

The prospect was a dazzling one.

Still, his answer was quite characteristic of Jolly Jack Jones, and he meant it, too.

"Mr. Lozee, I am very sorry for you," he said. "I believe you have been terribly wronged. I'll do all you ask, but I don't do it for money. If you were not worth one dollar I would help you just the same."

"Nobly spoken!" exclaimed Mr. Lozee, "and I believe what you say is true. Come, let us go. Shellboyer will have the bloodhounds on our track sooner or later. We have delayed a long time—too long—and now we haven't a moment to lose."

"Can you walk?" asked Jack.

"Certainly. Help me up. Here, we will walk in the brook; that will throw the bloodhounds off the scent."

Jack helped him to his feet and assisted him to remove his shoes and stockings; then he took off his own.

They then started walking along the bed of the brook together.

Mr. Lozee leaned heavily upon Jack's shoulder at first, but he seemed to gather strength as they advanced.

"We must find shelter before night," he said. "Of course you don't know this country at all?"

"Not at all."

"Nor do I. Probably I was not six times at High-Top

Hall before my last fatal visit. I was preparing to make a fine place of it when this thing come upon me, and now—Hark! Wasn't that a dog?"

It was nothing else.

The deep bay of a bloodhound could be heard in the distance.

"Stand by me, Jack Jones!" gasped Mr. Lozee. "It's Shellboyer and his dogs. The man is a perfect fiend. I took him out of the gutter and made him a millionaire. This is his gratitude. He would hunt me with bloodhounds and see me torn to pieces. On, boy! On! Protecting Powers, show us which way to go!"

And as they hurried forward over the slippery stones in the brook the deep bay of the bloodhounds was heard again.

### CHAPTER XX.

#### CAPTURED BY MOONSHINERS.

"They are close upon us, Jack! Oh, what shall we do?"

Half an hour had passed, and Jack and Mr. Lozee were still in the valley.

Even taking to the water had not saved them from being closely followed.

Lawyer Shellboyer had procured three bloodhounds, and engaged the assistance of two men, whom he employed about High-Top Hall.

They traced Mr. Lozee and Jack to the brook, and then, finding the trail lost, followed along its course.

The barking of the dogs and the shouts of the men could be heard not two hundred yards away, when Mr. Lozee seemed in despair.

They had come to the end of the valley now.

The mountain rose like a wall before them, and on either side were precipices too steep to climb.

"This way, sir," breathed Jack. "I see a way out! Follow me!"

It was just a narrow rift in the rocks ahead of them.

It could hardly be called a cave, for it was not high enough to stand up in and barely wide enough to crawl through.

But there was light ahead, and Jack was taking his chances.

Holding up his banjo, he crept through, closely followed by Mr. Lozee.

They came out into a wide open space, a circular valley, a deep down among the mountains.



"Links" these are called in Tennessee.

"The dogs will follow us!" gasped Mr. Lozee, getting on his feet.

"No, they won't, nuther!" exclaimed a voice right alongside of them.

A tall, slab-sided fellow, with a yellow beard hanging from his chin, and a long double-barreled shotgun, stepped in front of them coming out from among the trees.

"No one will foller you, neither man nor beast!" he drawled. "No more will you uns get outer this place alive! Yer in the Devil's Punch Bowl now, and the rule is, once into it never out of it. Stand still, whar ye be, or I'll blow you to blazes!"

"Oh, what shall we do?" gasped Mr. Lozee, clutching Jack's arm.

"Take it easy," replied Jack. "We will come out all right yet. Don't say a word."

The mountaineer glared fiercely at them.

Then he rolled a big rock in front of the opening and lay down beside it.

If you uns think of escaping look behind yer!"

Of course they looked.

There stood three more slab-sided Tennessee Crackers, motionless as statues in their rags.

Each had his double-barreled shotgun, and all three guns were cocked and leveled at Jack and Mr. Lozee.

On came the bloodhounds.

Jack could hear them scrambling through the cave. Their deep barks awoke the echoes of the sink.

"They must have gone this way!" Lawyer Shellboyer's voice called out.

"We better be careful, boss?" a voice answered. "Folks do say ez how thar's moonshiners around hyar, and they don't like strangers none!"

A chuckling laugh broke behind Jack and Mr. Lozee.

Bang!

The old double-barreled shotgun behind the rock had spoken.

A fierce yelp followed.

One of the bloodhounds dropped dead.

"Gosh all kemlock! Let's scoot!" the voice exclaimed.

Bang!

Another yelp—another dead bloodhound.

"Them ez youse looking for ain't hyar!" shouted the man behind the rock. "Leave this place onless you want to die the death of them dawgs."

There was a great scrambling then. The third bloodhound could be heard barking in full retreat.

"Now, it's up to us," thought Jack. "I must jolly these fellows. It's our only chance."

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" he laughed. "Good shot, mister! Say, we'll pay you all right for this. Mighty lucky we came on here!"

The men came threateningly around them.

"Quit that ther laffing!" cried the one who had shot the dogs. "Whar be you? What brung you hyar?"

"Why, we were chased in. Didn't you see?" cried Jack. "Don't be afraid of us. We won't hurt you. Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"Waah, I'll be hornsawgled if yew ain't a queer specimen!" drawled the Cracker.

"Waah, it's no matter with me?" demanded Jack.

"Laffing in ther face of death!"

"Pshaw! You wouldn't kill us?"

"Wouldn't we?"

"Get out! You're only joking. I'll give you some music. Want to hear me play the banjo, boss?"

"Play nothing! Who be yer?"

"My good friend," said Mr. Lozee, "I am the owner of High-Top Hall. Probably you know the place."

"What! Be yew Martin Lozee what disappeared a year ago?"

"I am the man. I have been held a prisoner in my own house by the man who set those dogs on me. This boy is my friend. He has helped me to escape. Show us the way out of this place. Help us to get to the nearest railroad station, and I'll give you a thousand dollars apiece."

The men consulted together in an undertone.

Jack sat down on a stone and began to play the banjo and to sing.

Of course, the men could be nothing but moonshiners.

Jack knew it, and he realized their danger, but he determined to put on his old jolly front and see what came of it.

"If they are going to shoot us I'll die playing the banjo," he thought. "They shan't scare me."

"By gum, that thar boy plays fine!" cried one of the men, after a few moments.

"An' sings better," added another.

They stopped talking and gathered about Jack.

They made him sing again and again.

When Jack did his bell piece, swinging the banjo to and fro, they were lost in admiration.

Mr. Lozee, although terribly anxious, took it all very quietly, until at last he could endure the suspense no longer.

"Enough of this, Jack!" he cried. "Gentlemen, what is your decision? Are we to be murdered in cold blood or do you accept my offer? Speak!"

"Let Ike Hopper speak," said one of the moonshiners, looking at the man who had killed the dogs.

"Waah, I've been a-thinkin' ez how ef they'll let themselves be blindfolded it mought be arranged erlong towards midnight," the man replied.

"We consent to that," said Mr. Lozee.

"And I'll play the banjo all the evening for you!" chuckled Jack. "I'll give you such music as you never heard in your lives. Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"Say, you've got more laff to the square inch into yew than any feller I ever run up against," exclaimed one of the men.

"Tie a string around yer laff, and choke it," remarked Hopper. "Mister, be you really Old Man Lozee?"

"I am."

"I can believe yew, for I see yew onct at the station tew years ago. Will yer pay cash?"

"My good friend, I can't do that. I have no money with me, but it shall be promptly sent to you if you will help us to escape."

"Say, I heard there was a crazy man kept hid up to High-Top Hall. Be yer him?"

(To be continued)



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### UMBRELLA 140 FEET HIGH.

Plans have been submitted and are being considered by the management of Luna Park for the erection of an umbrella of enormous size, which will cover more than an acre of ground and afford ample shade during the hot days and provide shelter when it rains for several thousand persons.

The plan under consideration calls for a steel shaft 140 feet high, with ten strong steel ribs, each 120 feet long, the ribs when lifted to cover an area of 240 feet in diameter. The covering of the structure will be light waterproof canvas, such as is now used for circus tents. At night the mast and ribs will be lighted with thousands of colored electric bulbs. Two proposals have been made for the masthead, one a powerful revolving search light, operated from the ground, and the other an intermittent flash light, which will answer for a beacon to incoming ships on the coast, as it is possible to see such a light thirty miles at sea.

### WHALERS FIGHT SHARKS.

On July 17 there arrived at New Bedford, Mass., two open boats containing twelve men of the crew of the whaling vessel Job R. Manta, who had become separated from their ship in a fog off Cape Henry. According to the men, a whale was sighted off the Virginia coast. Two boats were lowered for the chase, one in charge of Mate Brown and the other commanded by the second mate. Each crew put a harpoon into the quarry, but while they were making their capture the Manta became lost to sight in the fog.

The whale was lashed between the two boats and the mates laid a course toward the coast. Great schools of sharks were attracted by the carcass and for two days the men fought these scavengers with lances and oars. Finally they became exhausted and the whale was cut loose and given over to the sharks.

The men were without food and water when they were picked up by the Norwegian steamer Skard, bound for Christiania. They were transferred to the steamer Piel, bound, which ran into Vineyard Sound, where the whalers again took to their own boats and sailed across Buzzards Bay to this port.

### GRAND PRIZE GOES TO WESTERN ARTIST.

Frederic Carl Frieske has received the grand prize at the Panama-Pacific Exposition from the jury of awards in the American section of paintings. Mr. Frieske has seven examples in the Palace of Fine Arts, all of luminous and modern quality. They are entitled "The Garden Chair," "Sleep," "Youth," "Boatman," "Girl Embroidering," "Bay Window," "Garden" and "Summer."

Mr. Frieske was born in Michigan forty years ago, and he was fitted as a painter in the Chicago Art Institute and

the Art Students' League in New York, finishing his studies in the Julian Academy and the Whittier School in Paris.

His pictures have been shown in the Galleries Moderne, Venice; the Luxembourg, Paris; in the Moderne Gallery, Odessa, and in various cities in Germany and in this country. He won a gold medal in Munich in 1904 and a silver medal at the St. Louis Exposition, and has had prizes in various regular art exhibitions.

Other jury honors in the American section were awarded to Willard S. Metcalf, W. E. Schofield, the late J. W. Alexander and Richard E. Miller. Sargent's works were not considered, as his contributions are few and comparatively unimportant. Hassam, Chase and Mather were omitted from mention because of the special distinction extended to them by assigning individual rooms to each of them. The jury wished to confer extraordinary honor upon Frank Duveneck of Cincinnati for his dominant influence in the development of American art, and a special gold medal was awarded to him.

### PERFECT 3-INCH GUN FOR OUR SUBMARINES.

Secretary Daniels announced recently that the ordnance experts of the navy had designed and that the naval gun shops had built a new type of 3-inch rapid-fire gun which would be installed in Submarine M-1, soon to be placed in commission.

Mr. Daniels said every test had resulted satisfactorily, and that the gun and its carriage would be sent from the ordnance factory in Washington to New York for mounting on the submarine under construction at the Electric Boat Company's plant.

No navy in the world has a better weapon of the kind than the Ordnance Bureau has evolved, according to the Secretary. The carriage, it is explained, operates somewhat like those of disappearing guns in shore batteries. The rifle is raised through ports to the deck by electric machinery, and after firing is carried quickly back into its place under the water-tight hatch. The new gun is made shorter than the regular three-inch navy rifle to meet space limitations. This reduces its range somewhat, but it has been fitted for very high angle fire, which will give it some chance for use against aeroplanes.

No submarine now in commission in the United States navy mounts any outside defense gun. A number of German submarines have outside guns. All new submarines in the United States navy are to be equipped with these guns. This is considered an important matter, because without such weapons it is difficult for a submarine to attempt to exercise the belligerent right of visit and search when challenging merchant ships on the high seas during a war, and it was only when the Germans began to bring into action their new submarines, mounting such weapons, that it became apparent the German submarine could be used in holding merchantmen for visit and search.



# THE NINE WONDERS

— OR —

## THE ROUGH RIDERS OF THE DIAMOND FIELDS

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

### CHAPTER XI (continued)

Send them all to me," he added, "for I don't wish to have them worried by strangers."

In less than ten minutes after the boys had retired to their rooms sporting men began besieging the clerk for permission to go up and see them, but they were all refused with the statement that the manager alone could be seen.

"Where is the manager?" one man asked.

"He is in the crowd about here somewhere," replied the clerk.

"Point him out to me."

In a few minutes Parton was pointed out to him, and the man pushed his way through the crowd until he reached his side.

"Are you the manager of the Rough Riders?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Parry; "what can I do for you?"

"I want to have a talk with your pitcher."

"Well, you may talk with him as much as you please," said Parry, "when he has had a bath, changed his clothes and come down."

"But I want to have a private talk with him, so I would go up to his room."

"Oh, well, now," said Parton, "give him a chance to wash up and change his clothes. If we allowed people to rush in on them just whenever they wanted to they would have no chance to eat, sleep or change their shirts. What do you want to see him about, anyway?"

"On private business."

"Do you know him?" Parry asked.

"No."

"Then you can have no private business with him."

"That's all you know about it," retorted the man.

"Yes," assented Parry very coolly, "it's all I want to know about it," and he turned away and walked from him."

The man coolly walked to the foot of the stairs, where he took up his position, evidently with the intention of waiting until the boys came down. Parry watched him for a few moments and began making inquiry to find out who the man was, but no one seemed to know him. His dress and manner, however, told that he belonged to the sporting fraternity of the extreme West.

"I guess I'll go up and see Tom," Parry said to himself, "and tell him what sort of a chap it is that's waiting for him."

He did so, and advised Tom that instead of putting on his usual suit, to dress up in his neat business suit, and come down with the nine when they were ready, after

which he instructed the others to say when asked where their pitcher was that they guessed he was about somewhere.

They agreed to do so, and Parry returned downstairs to again mingle with the crowd.

Presently the boys began to come down by ones and twos, but the big sport at the foot of the stairs was on the lookout for the pitcher. Tommy passed him dressed in his business suit, and the man didn't even look at him.

By and by he became tired of waiting, and asked Teddy where his pitcher was.

"Oh, he's about somewhere," was the reply, and that was the answer he received from everyone he spoke to.

Finally he was heard to say that he would give fifty dollars to any man who would find the pitcher for him in the crowd.

"What's the matter? Can't you find him?" Tom asked, who was standing close enough to hear him.

"It seems I can't," returned the man. "Do you know him?"

"Yes; I've known him all my life."

"The deuce you have. Do you live up in the woods, too?"

"Yes; I was born and reared in the same village with him."

"Well, take me to him where I can have a private talk with him, and I'll give you fifty dollars."

"Hand over the money," said Tom, reaching out his hand.

"Not so fast, young man. I want to see that pitcher first."

"Hand it over to the clerk here then," suggested Tom, "with the understanding that he is to give it to me when I point out the pitcher to you."

The man went over to the clerk, accompanied by Tom, saying as he handed him a roll of bills:

"Give that to this young man here after he has brought the pitcher to me."

"What pitcher?" the clerk asked.

"Why, the pitcher for the Rough Riders' nine."

"Oh, yes, that's all right," laughed the clerk, as he took the money.

"There you are now, young man," said the sport, turning to Tom. "Now bring on your ball twirler."

"I'm the pitcher," quietly remarked Tom.

"What!" gasped the man in open-eyed wonder.

"Yes," said Tom, "my name is Tom Knatt, and I'm the pitcher of the nine who won the game to-day."



# Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, AUGUST 13, 1915.

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## GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

The United States holds property in the City of New York valued at \$66,331,000.

For the first time in the history of the San Jose, Cal., high school all the girls who graduated wore simple Grecian robes, costing only \$1 apiece.

Newark has planted 27,000 trees in ten years. Jersey City has set out 10,000 in eight years. East Orange, South Orange, East Rutherford, Passaic, Irvington, Belleville, Nutley and Montclair have each done considerable tree-planting.

Ceylon, according to the last census, has a population of 4,110,000, the chief element numerically being the Singhalese. The area is 25,000 square miles. The principal exports are tea, coffee, cinchona, rubber, cocoa, cinnamon, cardamoms, ebony, and the products of the coconut palm. A large source of wealth is also found in precious stones and pearl fisheries.

Loretta Kennedy, who is seven years of age, and who lives in Paterson, N. J., came home acting in a strange manner. Outside her home she almost collapsed from laughing. It was thought she was hysterical. Neighbors ran to her and found tucked away in her blouse a half-emptied bottle of whisky. After considerable questioning, Loretta was forced to admit that she had found it, and because it tasted so nice she drained half the bottle. In St. Joseph's Hospital a stomach pump restored her to her senses.

Death Valley is a desert valley in Inyo County, California, lying between the Panamint range on the west and the Funeral, Amargosa and Grapevine ranges on the east. It probably got its name from the fact that its bed is devoid of any form of life save in places a scrubby growth of cacti. It was once the bed of a salt lake. In the summer the temperature is excessive, reaching a maximum of 122 degrees. The air is very dry and dew never forms and the rainfall for five summer months does not exceed an inch and a half.

A Chinese steamship line to operate from Shanghai and other ports in China to the United States is about to be established to compete with the Japanese lines which now dominate the transpacific trade, according to advices received by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. The Pacific trade is seriously disturbed because of the recent order reserving for the use of Japanese shippers all space in ships under subsidy from the Japanese Government. According to the bureau's advices, Fung Sui, representing a syndicate of Chinese capitalists, is on his way to the United States to close contracts for material to construct a fleet of five vessels for freight and passenger service. The ships will make Shanghai a terminal port, and it is expected that the service will be extended to Hong-kong and Manila. Honolulu will be a port of call on both east and west bound trips. In order to take advantage of the congested freight situation in the Far East, due to the withdrawal of space in Japanese ships, the report says, two vessel probably will be purchased in the near future to start the new service.

## GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Teacher—Can you tell me what a dromedary is, Tommy? Tommy—Yes, ma'am; a dromedary is a two-masted camel.

"But, mamma, he called me a pie-face." "That didn't hurt you, did it?" "It didn't, mamma, until he began to mash the crust with his knuckles."

Ted—What makes you think old Moneybags doesn't intend to let you marry his daughter. Ned—The tip he gave me on the stock market was a loser.

"Can you lend me twenty, old chap? I'm going on my vacation and need it badly." "Wait till you get back, old fel; you'll need it worse then."

"Have you ever had palpitation of the heart?" asked the insurance examiner. "Well," replied the young man, blushing vividly, "I'm engaged to be married."

"Did your father teach you to do such things?" asked the minister of the boy whom he caught pummeling a companion. "Huh! I should say not! Dad can't even whip me."

"By George, that Mrs. Ka Flippe is a stunning woman, isn't she?" "I should think so. She hit me with her automobile the other day and it was three hours before I woke up."

Maud—See this ring? Archie gave it to me the other evening. Irene—I thought I recognized it. You'll find it has a rough place just under the setting that will make your finger sore.

Mistress—Mary, go to the door at once. Some one has rung three times. Mary—It's all right, mum. It's only that young feller as is smashed on Miss Maud. You needn't be afraid of his goin' away in a hurry.



## A HOPELESS CASE.

By D. W. Stevens

I don't wish my readers to think that I am self-conceited or egotistical, for I only state a plain fact when I say that, during my active years on the detective force there never came in a very difficult case, or a case which everybody else had given up, that I wasn't at once put on it.

Few detectives like to take up a case which has been worked on before, or in which the lapse of time has allowed of the loss of clues which might easily have been found in the beginning.

One of the worst of all cases came into my hands in this wise:

I had just brought to a successful issue the chase after a forger, and entered the office after an absence of over two months. I saw that the chief was troubled, but he no sooner saw me than his face brightened.

"Just the man I want," he said. "Clark, here is 'A Hopeless Case' for you to work up."

"What's the good of my wasting my time on it if it is hopeless?"

"We've got to appear to do something," he said, desperately. "The newspapers are going for us bald-headed. Here is a murder committed six weeks ago, and not a clew of the faintest kind. I have had seven men on it, and they've all given up beat. Don't talk back and try to reason with me—for you must take it."

Well, I was under orders. What could I do? Only quietly bridle my disgust and go to work.

I was soon in possession of all that was known. Henry Salsbury had been found dead in his bed one morning, his head having been crushed by a pair of heavy iron tongs, used for a wood fire in the grate in his bedroom.

Robbery had not been the motive, so far as could be seen, for nothing had been taken that was known of. Henry Salsbury was wealthy, fifty years of age, and a bachelor. And that was all there was to tell me.

At once going to work, determined to do the best I could, I inquired about his family and learned that he had two brothers, Arthur and Edward.

Arthur, like himself, was a bachelor, of forty-five or six, and by the terms of Henry Salsbury's will, was made sole legatee of his wealth.

"Ha!" I thought. "here is a motive, or at least a possible one."

But why was Edward, younger and a married man, left out in the cold? Had Henry and Edward been on bad terms? If so, here was another motive.

I inquired into the matter, and from authentic sources learned that, to all outward appearances, Henry and Edward were friends. But not leaving him anything! How was it to be explained?

"I can tell you," said a person who knew them well, of whom I inquired. "Henry met and loved a beautiful girl, much younger than himself. She liked him, although I don't believe she loved him, but he thought she did.

"He introduced his brother to her as his intended wife. Edward was captivated, she learned to love him, and they were married.

"Henry upbraided Edward for his lack of honor in winning her away from him. But the outside world never knew of his resentment, and they were, to all appearances, friends, although it has ever since been an understood thing that Edward would never handle a dollar of his brother's money."

This, then, disposed of any suspicion of Edward. If he had known what the will would be, he would never have committed the murder. However, I was satisfied that it had been done by somebody who would benefit by his death.

"How about Arthur?" I asked.

"He has known for years that he was his brother's heir."

"Then he must be the man," I thought.

I hunted up every scrap of information possible which concerned him, and on learning that he had been a little "fast," as it is termed, I was convinced that I had a hold on the right man. But how to prove it? There was the rub.

Arthur now occupied the house where the murder had been committed. I visited it, told him who I was and requested permission to examine the room where the murder had been done.

I was staggered by the readiness with which he acquiesced, and the earnestness of his tone in wishing that I might be successful in unearthing the murderer. I examined the room to my heart's content—it had not been changed since the murder, Arthur said—and then I began to glance about at the walls, the pictures, the articles of vertu, anything, everything, was scrutinized.

At one side of the room adjoining, into which I went, was a desk.

"This belonged to your brother?" I said, seating myself before it in the stuffed chair.

"It did."

"Has it been overhauled?"

"I have touched nothing, in the hope that by leaving things as they were found, some possible clew might be the result," he answered. "Even the waste-paper basket has not been emptied."

I glanced at the basket, then stooped and picked up a crumpled bit of paper and straightened it out—

A letter from a man begging for charity.

I opened another—

"Didn't he want to buy a county seat?"

I smoothed out another, still—

A broker advised him to purchase Erie.

"I'll be back presently," said Arthur Salsbury, as I picked up another.

Becoming absorbed in my work, I did not notice his absence; it was lucky he was absent, for finally I gave a start, and uttered a cry of joy. I held in my hand a letter, evidently commenced by Henry Salsbury on the morning of the day he had been murdered.

"Sir: Time was when I at least believed you honest, though I have good reason, heaven knows, to doubt your honor. Dishonest! You dishonest! It breaks my heart!

"And how are you going to save yourself? By getting help from the land you have stung like a poisonous adder. I see there is no other way, so come to me at ten to-night."



## INTERESTING ARTICLES

### AN INDIAN MARRIAGE.

Eunice Holmes, a full-blooded Indian whose tribal name was Laughing Waters, was married the other day by Alderman William F. Quinn in the Marriage Chapel in the Municipal Building, New York City, to August Charles Erbach, a German farmer of Summit, N. J. The bride, who is 24 years old, was born in Cherokee, Indian Territory. She does not know the names of her parents, both having died when she was a small girl. Until several months ago, when she came East, she lived with relatives. Erbach is 25 years old, and has been in this country five years. He gave his address as 312 East Fourteenth street, New York, but has a large farm in Summit. The couple will make their home on the farm. •

### HOW TO KNOW MUSHROOMS.

As everybody knows, a deplorable amount of good food goes to waste because the public is familiar with but few of the many edible species of fungi. It is true that the nutritive value of fungi has been much exaggerated; they are by no means comparable in dietary value to meat, as is often claimed; but, on the other hand, they are more nutritious and when properly cooked decidedly more palatable than many things that enter into the everyday menu. A desultory propaganda in behalf of mycophagy has been carried on for years, both in this country and abroad.

The latest contribution to this campaign is Bulletin No. 175, issued by the Department of Agriculture, entitled "Mushrooms and Other Common Fungi." In this useful manual the authors, Flora W. Patterson and Vera K. Charles, tell us, among other things, of the efforts which certain European Governments have made to teach their citizens the food value of mushrooms. All over France exhibits of the more desirable species are held; while at Rouen during the season there are daily lectures on this subject, illustrated by fresh specimens. In Saxony systematic instruction concerning mushrooms is given in the public schools.

The French have taken to canning many wild mushrooms, in addition to the familiar *Agaricus campestris* grown in mushroom cellars, and these are now exported to the United States, which also receives tons of dried wild mushrooms from China.

The new bulletin contains descriptions, in language as non-technical as the circumstances admit, of more than 150 species of fungi, together with splendid photographs of at least half of the species described. The poisonous species are carefully pointed out, and several recipes for cooking the other kinds are appended.

### NATIONAL SOCIETY OF AMBULANCE DOGS.

The National Society of Ambulance Dogs of France now has eight kennels where experts are busy training patrol dogs, dispatch carriers, trench guards and ambulance dogs for service at the front. Two hundred and twenty-five patrol dogs have just been sent to the front to

accompany reconnoitering parties and carry messages. The dog is able to perform this duty more quickly and safely than a man, and thus permit a patrolling party to maintain communication with the main force. It takes only ten days for a dog to learn to perform this service like a trained soldier.

The trench dog is taught to maintain silence until the enemy is within 200 yards, and then to give warning by a low growl. Many attempts of the enemy to make surprise attacks in the night have been detected by dogs. The service is as dangerous as that of an advanced sentry, and the dog often shares the same fate. Clarion, a remarkably intelligent sentry dog, which became the glory of his company before he was killed by a bomb, was buried with pomp and honored with a cross.

True, a little fox terrier, which sought out 150 wounded men in concealed places during the battle of the Marne, was recently sent back to the front after a well-earned rest. True stuck to his post during the pursuit of the Germans until his master was killed, when he lost his company. He turned up later, exhausted and footsore, at the kennel of the dog society, where he had been trained.

### HISTORIC MARKER DESTROYED.

The mound of rocks which has been the only marker for the southeast corner of Kansas since its admittance as a State and the northeast corner of the Indian Territory since the Territory was recognized has been razed and a real marker placed in the ground.

The mound was placed there to mark the dividing line between the Osages and Cherokees at the time of the Missouri Compromise in 1823, and ever since it has been respected and observed as the boundary between Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma by red men and white. A rock road was proposed recently, and the county surveyor of Cherokee County was called to bury a marker and erect witness markers so that the road could go directly over the corner-stone instead of around it.

The southeast corner of Kansas is a quarter of a mile south of where the Government ordered it located. Coincident with that fact is the legend among the pioneers in that locality to the effect that one of the Government's surveyors who had charge of the expedition to make permanent boundaries in Kansas when it was admitted to the Union in 1861 was suffering a headache the morning the work was begun, due to a late session with a relative of Jean Barle on the night before.

The Government ordered the boundary to begin at a point where the thirty-seventh parallel crossed the western boundary of Missouri. Instead, the surveyor began at the pile of rock, which some Indians told him was the boundary line, instead of at the parallel, which was a quarter of a mile north. The surveying party got back to the parallel at a point south of Coffeyville, says the Topeka Capital, leaving a triangular strip of ground in southeast Kansas that should have belonged to the Indian Territory. But the land laws have given it to Kansas "for keeps."





#### MAGIC MIRROR.

Fat and lean funny faces. By looking in these mirrors upright your features become narrow and elongated. Look into it sideways and your phiz broadens out in the most comical manner. Size 3 1/4 x 2 1/4 inches, in a handsome imitation morocco case.

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#### TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.



The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the center of the purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it.

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#### THE IRON CROSS

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#### X-RAY WONDER

This is a wonderful little optical illusion. In use, you apparently see the bones in your hand, the hole in a pipe-stem, the lead in a pencil, etc. The principle on which it is operated cannot be disclosed here, but it will afford no end of fun for any person who has one. Price, 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

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#### SNAPPER PENCIL

Sometimes your jocular friend helps himself to the pencil sticking up from your vest pocket. Let him take this one. When he attempts to use it, a pair of springs shoot out and rap him so smartly on the knuckles that he swears off taking other people's property. A dandy little trick affording no end of amusement.

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#### MINIATURE COMPASS CHARM.

A beautiful charm, to be worn on the watch chain. It consists of a true and perfect compass, to which is attached, by a pivot, a powerful magnifying glass. When not in use the magnifying glass fits closely inside the compass and is not seen. The compass is protected by a glass crystal, and is handsomely silver-nickel plated and burnished, presenting a very attractive appearance. Here you have a reliable compass, a powerful magnifying glass, and a handsome charm, all in one. It is a Parisian novelty, entirely new.

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#### TRICK CIGARETTE BOX.



This one is a corker! Get a box right away, if you want to have a barrel of joy. Here's the secret: It looks like an ordinary red box of Turkish cigarettes. But it contains a trigger, under which you place a paper cap. Offer your friend a smoke and he raises the lid of the box. That explodes the cap, and if you are wise you will get out of sight with the box before he gets over thinking he was shot.

Price, 15c., postpaid.

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**THE MULTIPLYING CORKS.**—A small round box is shown to be empty and one of the spectators is allowed to place three corks in it. The cover is put on and the box is handed to one of the spectators, who, upon removing the cover, finds six corks in the box. Three of the corks are now made to vanish as mysteriously as they came. Very deceptive.

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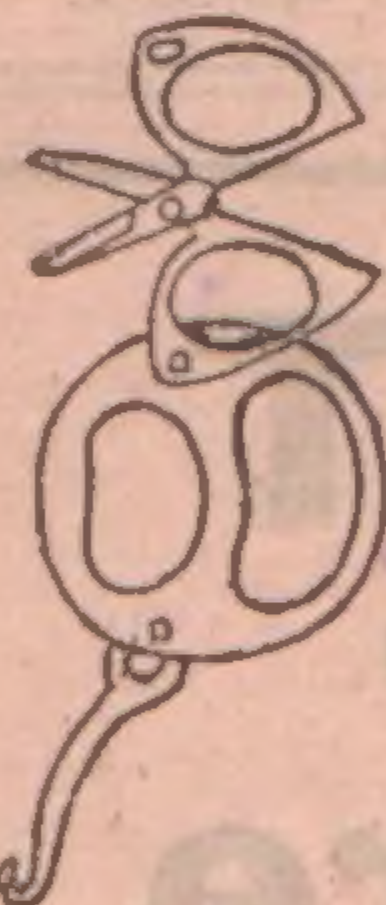
#### SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nicked tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust.

Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

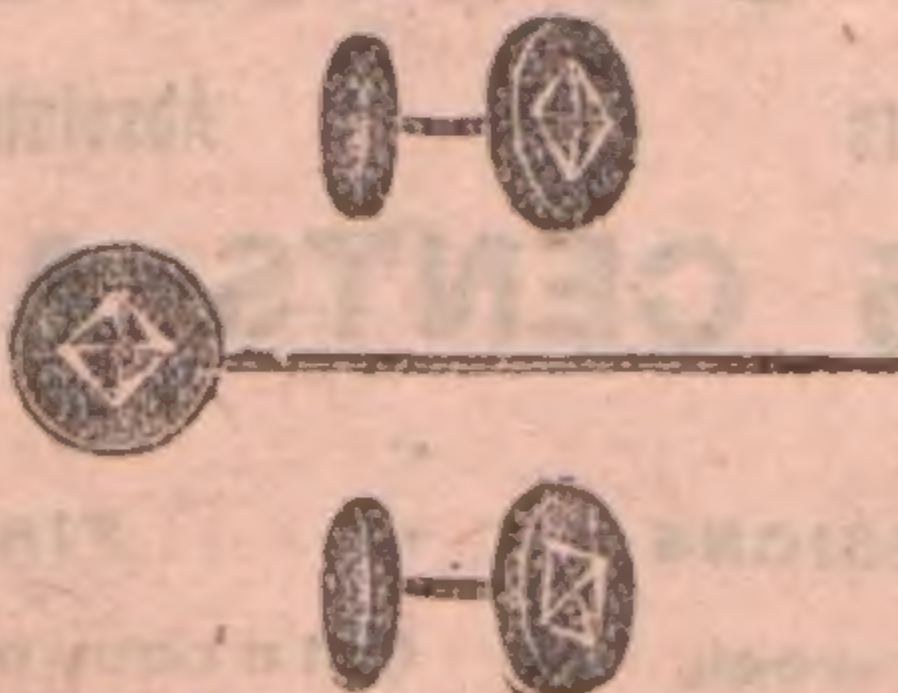


#### HANDY TOOL

Every boy should possess one of these handy little instruments. It consists of a buttonhook, a cigar-cutter, scissors, key-ring and bottle-opener, all in one. The steel is absolutely guaranteed. Small catches hold it so that it cannot open in the pocket. Price by mail, postpaid, 15 cents each.

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The holder of this pencil is beautifully nicked with grooved box-wood handle, giving a firm grip in writing; the pencil automatically supplies the lead as needed while a box of these long leads are given with each pencil. The writing of this pencil is indelible the same as ink, and thus can be used in writing letters, addressing envelopes, etc. Bills of account or invoices made out with this pencil can be copied the same as if copying ink was used. It is the handiest pencil on the market; you do not require a knife to keep it sharp; it is ever ready, ever safe, and just the thing to carry.

Price of pencil, with box of leads complete, only 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen 90c. postpaid.

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If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of

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#### Learn to swim by one trial

Price 35 cents, Postpaid

These water-wings take up no more room than a pocket-handkerchief. They weigh 8 ounces and support from 50 to 250 pounds. With a pair anyone can learn to swim or float. For use, you have only to wet them, blow them up, and press together the two knee marks under the mouthpiece.

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#### BUBBLER.



The greatest invention of the age. The box contains a blow-pipe of neatly enameled metal, and five tablets; also printed directions for playing numerous

soap-bubble games, such as Floating Bubbles, Repeaters, Surprise Bubbles, Double Bubbles, The Boxers, Lung Tester, Supported Bubbles, Rolling Bubbles, Smoke Bubbles, Bouncing Bubbles, and many others. Ordinary bubble-blowing, with a pipe and soap water, are not in it with this scientific toy. It produces larger, more beautiful and stronger bubbles than you can get by the ordinary method. The games are intensely interesting, too.

Price, 12c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

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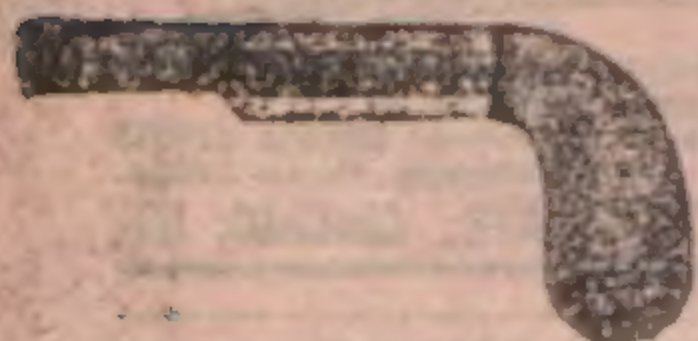
A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg, no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch fire to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncoils itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to be gliding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying

danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim, while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 8c.; 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 60c., sent by mail, postpaid.

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Price 12c. each by mail.

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